

Growing Parent®

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How to finance your child's college education

Even if it's eighteen years before your baby goes to college, it's a good idea to start planning and saving now.

By Lynn Holland

When I was in college in the late 1960s, scholarships and loans paid my tuition at the state university. My mother sent me a monthly check for living expenses out of her household budget.

Now I have a baby, and I wonder whether my parents' unplanned approach will be adequate when my son gets to college age.

How much will it cost?

How much money will a child born in the 1980s need for college?

Today's freshman class faces

| Child's age now | Estimated total college cost | | Amount needed to save monthly (At 10% interest) | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------|---|----------|
| | Public | Private | Public | Private |
| 1 | \$57,000 | \$114,000 | \$107.00 | \$214.00 |
| 3 | 50,000 | 99,000 | 120.00 | 239.00 |
| 6 | 40,000 | 81,000 | 145.00 | 293.00 |
| 9 | 33,000 | 66,000 | 190.00 | 379.00 |
| 12 | 27,000 | 54,000 | 275.00 | 550.00 |

an average cost of \$4500 a year at public schools and twice that for private ones. Estimates are that cost will increase seven percent a year.

Ignoring the impossibility of predicting what will happen in the economy in the next 15 years, these figures work out to about \$12,500 a year for public school in the year 2000, and 25,000 a year for private school — or a total of \$50,000 public and \$99,000 private.

How much is that a month?

What kind of savings plan would you need to meet those kinds of expenses? Some very rough figures: If you start saving \$120 a month right now in an account earning 10% interest, in 15 years you may (depending on your tax status) have enough to cover the cost of a public school education. Depositing a lump sum of \$12,000 right now, again at 10% interest, will yield the same results. (See charts.)

Saving and taxes

All of these calculations completely ignore the issue of taxes

and the very large bite they can take out of your savings. That's why it is important to consider carefully where you can put the money you are saving so it will earn the most interest and be liable for the least taxes.

Children are in a much lower tax bracket than their wage-earning parents, so it often makes sense to put savings in their names. Taxes due on their money and interest will be less than taxes due on your money and interest. Two common ways to do this are custodial accounts and Clifford, or short-term, trusts.

• **Custodial accounts.** The simplest way to save is to deposit funds in your child's name in a custodial account under the Uniform Gift to Minors Act. A bank, mutual fund, brokerage house, or other financial institution will have the necessary forms to set up the account. All you need is a social security number for your child.

Each parent can deposit up to \$10,000 a year in a custodial account. The interest earned is

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| Child's age now | Lump sum needed to deposit now to yield full four year cost | |
|-----------------|---|----------|
| | Public | Private |
| 1 | \$11,250 | \$22,500 |
| 3 | 12,000 | 23,700 |
| 6 | 12,800 | 25,800 |
| 9 | 14,000 | 28,000 |
| 12 | 15,200 | 30,500 |

College costs

Continued from preceding page

then taxed at the child's lower rate.

The disadvantage of a custodial account is that the funds belong irrevocably to the child, and are transferred to him or her at age 18 or 21. You cannot get back any of the money yourself in an emergency, nor can you be sure it will be used for the purpose you intended.

• **Trusts.** Another alternative is to have an attorney set up a short-term or Clifford trust, with your child as beneficiary. You deposit a lump sum of cash, stocks, real estate, or other assets in this trust, and any income earned is taxed at the child's rate. You can use all the income for the college fund. And when the trust dissolves (in ten years and one day), you get back all the money you put in originally.

In any case, professional tax and investment advice from your banker, accountant, or lawyer is a good idea, especially since tax and banking regulations change from year to year and state to state.

Start saving now

It hasn't been that long since I finished paying off my own student loans, and there are a lot of other demands on our family budget these days. It's a little overwhelming to think about saving such a large amount of

money for an event so far in the future.

Most financial planning experts say, however, that the most important thing about saving for a college education is to start as early as possible, and to be regular about it. It doesn't matter if you can't save a lot every month. Even a small amount, with interest over 10 or 15 years, will add up.

In addition, you can encourage your child, when he's old enough, to add to his college fund with the money he makes babysitting or working odd jobs. You can encourage grandparents and relatives to deposit money into the college fund on birthdays and holidays. You can also make sure you carry enough life insurance so that if anything happens to you, there will be funds for college costs.

Also remember that colleges provide financial aid in the form of scholarships, grants, work study, and loans. Even if you don't save anything at all, there will be ways your child can get an education if he wants it.

Last but not least, it's never too early to help and encourage your child to develop a love of learning so he'll be able to take full advantage of that college education.

Lynn Holland is Associate Editor of Growing Parent.

Success and happiness start with self-concept learned at home

Happiness attracts happiness. All our lives we look for the things that can give us happiness, but all the while that very feeling lies within us. Real happiness comes not from riches but from doing something worthwhile.

By Bill Peterson

Promises of happiness surround us.

Buy this and you'll be happy. Live here and you'll be happy. Vacation here. Eat there. Attain this level of financial security and happiness will surely follow.

In reality, happiness tends to be a very elusive commodity. You buy the new outfit that seemed guaranteed to bring pleasure but instead of elation you feel let down.

The new car gets dented and loses its lustre.

You get the promotion, move to the new home, eat at the nicest restaurant. And still you find yourself questioning: "Is this all there is?"

In looking around you may notice that some people who seem to "have it all" look and act less happy than others who seem to have little reason to rejoice. What makes the difference?

The common ingredient

Real happiness seems to come from a sense of **being** worthwhile — a deep and abiding conviction that your very existence makes a difference. Further, as often as not, this feeling of **being** worthwhile is cou-

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Success

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pled with knowing that you are **doing** something worthwhile.

Social workers "do something worthwhile," you may be thinking — or teachers or preachers or even police officers. But what about me?

It is in your role as **parent** that you have a most remarkable opportunity to do something worthwhile — and that is to help your **children** develop that feeling of being worthwhile.

A worthwhile self-concept

Parents who help their child develop a healthy self-concept, or a sense of being worthwhile, are giving the child one of the most fantastic gifts imaginable.

The self-concept is the sum total of all the beliefs an individual holds about herself. It is the boundary or limit-setter on achievement. Studies show that the way an individual thinks about himself determines most everything else about him.

People rarely exceed their self-concept in terms of their accomplishments in life. High self-concept individuals can overcome incredible odds and land on their feet. Low self-concept people, on the other hand, can get "blown away" by the slightest wind of adversity.

How self-concept develops

How is self-concept developed?

It is not something we are born with. Rather, we develop self-concept over time. It results from our interpretation of the events that occur in our lives, and from our successes and setbacks in coping with life's challenges.

The home and family provide the primary context for self-concept development. In the early stages of life when the self-concept is still very subject to influence, the family gives the child



feedback on who she is and how she is doing in her growth and development.

Homes where each family member is valued, where there is freedom to take risks, and where there is permission to grow and change are likely to produce high self-concept in children.

On the other hand, the chances of low self-concept increase when the home and family atmosphere is characterized by teasing, blaming, and evaluating.

Other factors

Teasing questions such as "How'd it go in school today, dummy?" or "Did you trip and make a fool of yourself again today, clumsy?" have no place in the high self-concept home. Vulnerable young (or old) self-concepts may not get the joke, and only take it as one more affirmation that "Yes, I truly am dumb," or "It's true, I really am clumsy."

Yet parents do not deserve all the credit if a child develops high self-esteem, or all the blame if he develops low self-esteem. It is the child's own interpretation of what is occurring that determines self-esteem. And, for whatever reason, some children persist in taking in all the "bad me" data, while filtering out the good messages — or vice versa.

I was talking to a group about self-esteem recently, and one

middle-aged woman reported that while she was still in high school she overhead her parents talking. They said that George, her older brother, never had to crack a book to get good grades, but she really had to work at it.

Now, I'm sure these were not "bad" parents. They were probably just making a valid observation about the difference in study habits and results for their two children. They undoubtedly did not expect their daughter to overhear.

But the result, as this woman reported it, was that she thought she was stupid until her thirties, when she reentered college to pick up some missing credits and complete her degree. Only then could she start to see and trust her own abilities apart from that parental evaluation.

A daily job

You can do something worthwhile every day.

Listen to your children. Even if it is preverbal babbling or adolescent awkwardness, listen.

Do something worthwhile.

Let your child know, in no uncertain terms, of your love for him.

Dr. Peterson is a husband, father, counselor, and frequent contributor to *Growing Parent*. He also conducts seminars and retreats on marriage, parenting, and family living.

Funny books bring the joy of laughter and help communication

Humorous stories can teach children — and their parents — serious lessons about life and learning.

By Jill May

When my first daughter was born, I loved to watch her respond to our attention with laughter. I wanted us to continue to laugh together, to share common good times, and to communicate with each other.

How does a family develop a pattern of communication which includes laughter?

One of the things I learned when I was a children's librarian was that books brought a shared experience for parent and child, and that funny books helped the child understand the adult world while showing the parent what it is a child cares about and needs.

Mutual enjoyment

Books that meet a baby's needs must also be entertaining for the parent. While the parent shares the story, the child responds to both the story and the parent's pleasure with the tale. By the time your baby is eighteen months old, you can find some stories that are fun for everyone.

• **Sophie and Jack** by Judy Taylor is simple, short, and easy to follow. In the story, two hippopotamus children are playing hide and seek. Jack hides among some boulders, and since his fat, round, gray body looks just like a boulder, Sophie can't find him.

The book asks the child to be

part of the story: "Sophie can't find Jack anywhere. Can you?"

The adult reading the story will easily find Jack, but it will take a two-year-old some time to see where he is. When he does, though, the joke becomes a shared one, and the parent and child will laugh together at Sophie's inability to find Jack.

Understanding values

If children hear humor they do not understand they will put in their own values and their own interpretations. Many stories have an element of humor which entertains the parent and the child for very different reasons.



• **Kate's Car**. Kay Chorao has created a satisfying experience for both toddler and parent with her book **Kate's Car**, yet the experience is a different one for the child than it is for the adult.

In this story Kate's conversation is similar to the early toddler talk of all small children. She has seen a car in her picture book, and she uses her limited vocabulary to tell the adults around her that that is what she wants.

"Car," Kate cries.

But no one understands. They think she wants a real car.

It is another child who finally

understands Kate and finds the toy car that Kate has misplaced. The humor is directed at the adult who expects children to understand more about the world and to want more sophisticated things than they can understand. Toddlers do not understand why the adults in the story do not understand Kate, but they are satisfied with the story's outcome. Kate gets her car, and both she and the young listeners are happy.

As an adult, I enjoy reading about Kate and being reminded that the world of the child is simple and direct and that children are satisfied with small pleasures. **Kate's Car** reminds me that if I try to understand the world as children do I will be able to communicate much better with them.

Exploring emotions

An educator who studied the stages of children's play development between birth and two years said that mostly what children under two do is explore.

While a toddler is not yet ready to understand or identify the alphabet, he is ready to explore emotions, attitudes and animals with you.

• **A is for Angry**, by Sandra Boynton, is funny enough to keep you entertained through several readings.

Cartoon illustrations show child-animals gleefully cavorting or pouting behind the letters which start the words describing their emotions.

These humorous caricatures make the whole concept of emotions come alive. As you explore this funny book you are sharing new information which your child will later use in other ways. Each new idea can be applied to the child's growing concept of the world around him.

Continued next page

Solving problems

Stories that offer simple experiences children can identify with will keep them still for fifteen or twenty minutes. For the child it is reassuring to see a minor conflict resolved with gentle humor.



• **A Kiss for Little Bear.** Else Minarik's straightforward story is a pleasant adventure of love.

Little Bear sends a picture to Grandmother. She returns the favor by sending him a kiss. The messengers between Little Bear and Grandmother are patient at first, but when Little Bear asks Hen to take a kiss back to Grandmother, she refuses, saying, "It gets all mixed up!"

The adult reading the story will be amused by this tale's predictable plot. The characters show that mix-ups really do travel with gossip — and kisses.

Maurice Sendak's delightful stylized illustrations add much of the humor. The story is retold in the illustrations, so after a few readings the child can "read" the story on his own. Then the illustrations take on new meanings and become an even funnier adventure for the child.

Sharing the action

Sharing a book helps create a special time for parent and child. Books which ask the child to become involved help him understand that he is not only a listener but also a participant.

• **Who Sank the Boat** by Pamela Allen is a perfect participation book in which the author constantly asks questions.

After telling you that five good animal friends have decided to go for a row in a boat, Allen asks whose entry upset the boat.

Finally she says, "Was it the little mouse, the last to get in, who was the lightest of all? Could it be him? You DO know who sank the boat."

It is not through the text that the audience understands who sank the boat. Instead, readers are treated to an adventure in pictures which is both comical and carefully developed.

This book is funny because Allen has created real personalities for her animal characters and the child can enjoy the story at the same level as the adult.

The child also controls the story because it is his answer to each question which causes the reader to continue with the text. Sharing books like this one helps the child reach a new understanding of humor. While observing the outlandish behavior of the animals the child is also learning about joking and laughter. Jokes are an important emotional resource, and the child who understands joking has a valuable tool for solving emotional difficulties.



The lessons of joking

Jokes usually demand an ability to "read the circumstances" and understand why someone has failed. Through this the child learns what will and will not work.

• **Rosie's Walk** is about a fox who can't seem to catch Rosie, the hen. The illustrations show the slapstick adventures of the two and the text tells the story in simple terms. **Rosie's Walk** invites you to say, "What is happening? Oh, look at the fox! Will he catch Rosie?" The child can tell you the story that is there for you both to see.

One day you will realize that your communication with your child has become a two-way street. Your child will be discussing literature with you and sharing his delight in a story you both enjoy. Then the joy of laughter that keeps us all sensible in this sometimes chaotic world will be shared, and you and your child will have a bond to nurture and maintain.



Jill May is an Associate Professor at Purdue University (Lafayette, Indiana) specializing in children's literature. An active member of several professional organizations concerned with literature and children, Professor May also works as a book consultant for *Growing Child*.

A letter from your preschooler

Dear Mom and Dad,

We've been having a lot of hectic mornings lately. By the time I get to preschool, I feel like crying . . . and sometimes I do. I know that makes you feel bad.

I know you're in a hurry to get to your job or classes on time. But I think we'd all be happier if we could find some ways to make our mornings less rushed.

What would help me most is to have a set schedule, like we do at preschool. First we have a story and then we have a snack and then we go outside. Teacher tells us if we're going to have any changes that day.

I think we could do something like that at home. I like to know when I've got to get up, dressed, have my breakfast, and gather my things for the day.

Do you know what would help me get out of bed in the morning? My own alarm clock. You could teach me how to set it. Then you wouldn't have to keep coming in to check and see if I'm up.

I know sometimes I seem like a slowpoke in the morning. Here's a way to keep me moving. My teacher plays "Beat the Clock" with us at school. Whenever she wants us to do something in a certain time, she sets a timer. We could do the same thing at home, using the kitchen timer.

Another thing that would help me get ready on time is to pick out the next day's clothes the night before. Then I'll know what to put on when I wake up, and I won't forget anything!

We could also pack my lunch the night before. I'm old enough to help you make a sandwich or get out the fruit or crackers and cheese.

Then in the morning, I'd really like a hot breakfast. Something simple, like oatmeal or soft-boiled eggs, is fine.

Another thing that will help me get ready in the morning is to have a special spot to keep everything I need for school. I need a place to hang my coat, hat, gloves, boots. I have a place like that at school — a "cubbyhole." I hardly ever lose anything, because I know exactly where to put all my papers and treasures and books.

And a backpack or school bag would really be useful, too. I could carry my "show and tell" in it, and my lunch and my papers.

The only thing I need is a great big hug and kiss from you. If we work together, we can get ready on time and still stay friends!

XOXO
Love,
Your preschooler

"A letter from your preschooler" was written by Karen Borneman Spies and Robin R. Kuhn. Karen is a freelance writer with a master's degree in education. A mother of two children, she has written for other national publications. Robin has worked in early childhood education for ten years. She is director of a preschool and daycare center which serves 130 families.

How I learned to love reading

"Books are not merely learning instruments; they are also largely entertainment.

"Both Gibbon and Fielding described books as 'for amusement and instruction.' I don't believe in the bifurcation of amusement and instruction. Even though books are not usually considered part of the entertainment industry, I consider pleasure an important function of books. If it's fun, some people think, it can't be education. But I believe there is a place for hokum — in both books and television.

"Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* awakened me to what the writing of history could be. Gibbon was an amateur, and I think that is the greatest vocation of all — for an amateur is a lover, and a lover is a person who does something not because he gets paid for it but because he can't help it; he must do it. Gibbon was no dogmatist: His humanity was broad, and he saw experience as something that was iridescent, that had a different meaning depending on where you stood or where you sat. In that way, he opened the world in ways a dogmatic historian never could. In my study at home, where I still do my writing and try to be a historian myself, I have an engraving of Edward Gibbon, who looks down at me with his triple chin and encourages me to try doing some of the things he did."

Daniel J. Boorstin, Librarian of Congress and author of *The Discoverers* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Americans: The Democratic Experience*

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From the Editor



Nancy Kleckner

Acceptance: Allowing children room to be themselves

How do you rate at accepting yourself as you are?

Do you wish you could be more understanding, like your favorite aunt, or as tall as your sister, or more patient with your children like your next door neighbor?

How do you accept your children? Do you wish they were a little less boisterous, more outgoing socially, more like you, less like your spouse?

If your child is six months old, you probably haven't spent a lot of time "wishing" or thinking about changes yet.

But if your child is old enough to:

- (a) Express preferences ("I hate peas!")
- (b) Display definite signs of a developing personality (temper tantrums)
- (c) State opinions ("I don't like you anymore!")

then you've probably wondered how you could change, alter or do away with some of the habits, attitudes or behavior you don't like.

It's true that we can teach children certain kinds of behavior. We can give them values, moral guidelines and an understanding of right and wrong. But at some point the *basic child* takes over and then the chances of always exerting total parental control are very slim.

Case in point: my son's dislike of crew neck sweaters.

When Bob was a kindergarten lad, he didn't pay much attention to the clothes I bought and laid out for him to wear.

Much too quickly he was out of kindergarten and into blue jeans and the teen years with definite opinions about what he would and would not wear.

I thought teenagers looked great in crew

neck sweaters and I thought Bob would look especially handsome.

He hated them. He said he got too warm and refused to wear anything knitted that even remotely resembled a sweater. So much for Mother's expectations.

Did I accept his preference?

No, I didn't. I bought him several beautiful crew neck sweaters, told him how expensive they were, how much I would like it if he wore them, how nice he would look, etc. It didn't work.

Eventually I gave up. I pushed the sweaters into the far corner of the drawer and launched a new attack on the perils of long hair (another battle I lost, incidentally).

Years later, a funny thing happened on the college campus: Bob decided he liked crew neck sweaters.

This is just a simple story, but it illustrates the point. Things we wish for our children may or may not happen, but we can save ourselves some wear and tear by trying to figure out:

1. Am I doing this for my child or for me?
2. Is it necessary, important or worthwhile for my child?
3. What terrible thing will happen if my child does (does not) do (have) this?

This doesn't mean parents must totally abdicate making decisions about their children. It is not appropriate to wear cut-off jeans to church, for example, no matter how insistent the child is.

But there's plenty of room in the growing-up process to accept our children as they are and allow them to make some decisions. It's good practice for the decisions that will count so much 15 or 20 years from now.

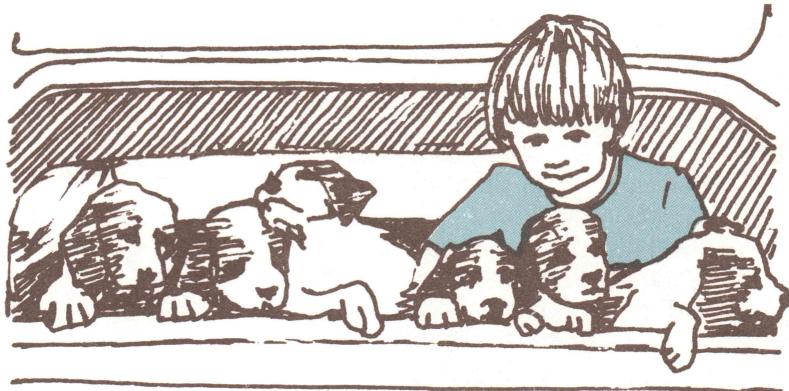
Fun things to do in February

Child safety seat sense

On July 1, 1985, Wyoming became the 50th state to enact safety laws for children traveling in automobiles. It marked the culmination of a safety campaign mounted by parents, educators, insurance companies, physicians and legislators. That campaign had been gaining momentum since January 1, 1978, when the first child passenger restraint law in the United States went into effect in Tennessee. Now, with every young child potentially protected by safety laws and safety seats, it's hoped that automobile accidents will drop from their first-place position as the number-one killer of American children.

Still, child safety seats are only as effective as their proper use. Improperly used, they may not prevent deaths and injuries to infants and children. Indeed, used incorrectly, safety seats can sometimes be more dangerous than no restraint at all.

The National Transportation



Safety Board reports that according to their studies child restraints are misused 64 percent of the time because of both difficult-to-follow instructions for their use and parental carelessness. Misuse cases most often included children not being harnessed into the safety seat correctly and seats not being properly secured by the vehicle lap belt. In cases where the lap belt was routed improperly, 75 percent of the parents didn't know the routing was incorrect.

Safety seats are designed to spread the impact of a crash or hard stop evenly over a child's delicate body. When a moving car hits another object, or when a sudden, hard braking motion brings it to an abrupt stop, the occupants of the car keep moving forward — at the same speed the car was traveling — until something stops them. In a 30 mph crash, an unrestrained or improperly restrained child can be thrown forward with a force equal to 30 times its own weight. The safety seat is designed to restrain the child and allow him to "ride down the

crash."

All child safety seats manufactured since 1981 must meet government safety standards, which include dynamic testing in a simulated 30 mph crash. The laws are in place, and the safety seats work — but only when used properly.

The most important guide for using a child safety seat is the manufacturer's instructions. These should be read, followed and retained, especially if you purchase an infant seat that will later convert to toddler use. If you pass on the seat to someone else when your child has outgrown it, pass along the manufacturer's instructions as well.

In addition, consider the following points when purchasing and using a child safety seat:

- All child safety seats are designed to be used with automobile lap belts, in addition to their own harnesses and shields. Remember that the lap belt must be placed over or through the safety seat according to the manufacturer's instructions. Im-

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How to buy and correctly use safety seats for children.

Helping children to become less demanding Page 4

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What are you doing to that child? Page 6

Sometimes anything you do is the wrong thing!

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Activity calendar Page 8 (6-months to 6 years)

proper placement of the vehicle lap belt can weaken the structural integrity of the seat and cause it to rip apart in a collision.

- All harnesses and lap belts should be "snugged up" after the child is in the seat. Some vehicle combination lap/shoulder belts permit free movement of the lap belt after it's buckled, which is undesirable for child restraints. To prevent this, a special locking clip can be purchased and should be used.

- Arm rests add nothing to the safety features of a child seat and shouldn't be relied upon to protect a child. In 30 mph crash tests of seats with harnesses and arm rests, when the harness wasn't used, the "dummy" child slipped out from under the arm rest and was thrown from the car.

- Lightweight household infant carriers or car beds shouldn't be used in place of safety restraints. They're not designed to hold up under impact forces.

- Where possible, child safety seats should be placed in the rear seat of the automobile. Center rear is safest.

- Not all safety seats will fit into all cars, so try before you buy. When purchasing, look for a seat manufactured in 1981 or later that suits you, your child and your car.

- A number of designs in infant and child restraint seats are marketed. Whichever you purchase, it's essential that you use all the functions of the seat. (If it has a top tether strap, for instance, you must be willing to properly anchor it.)

Here are descriptions of some of the more popular styles, with guides for their general use.

Infant seats — for babies from birth to about 20 pounds

- Always use infant seats facing the rear of the car so the impact of a crash is spread

across the back of the baby.

- Both the seat harness and the vehicle lap belt must be used to secure the seat and child. Without both, the child and seat may be thrown from the car or against the dash or windshield in a crash.



- For very young babies, rolled-up receiving blankets wedged between the sides of the seat and the baby will provide extra support and increase comfort.

- Both infant-only and convertible (to toddler seat) models work well. Convertible models save money since you buy only one, but infant-only seats are less bulky, and sleeping babies can be carried in them undisturbed.

Toddler seat with 5-point harness

- This seat faces forward ideally in the rear seat of the auto for greater safety, and is used when the child is able to sit up alone and is too long or fussy for an infant seat.



- The 5-point harness goes over both shoulders, both hips and over the crotch. It must be securely fastened and fit snugly.

- Both the 5-point harness and the vehicle lap belt must be fastened. Using only the harness without anchoring the seat with the vehicle lap belt according to manufacturer's instructions can be more injurious than using no restraint at all. In a crash when only the harness is fastened, both the child and seat are hurtled through the car, with the seat adding extra weight to the impact.



Toddler seat with harness and tether

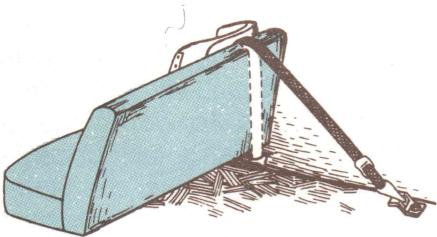
- Less than 10 percent of the people who buy a tether-style seat anchor it correctly, making it the highest incidence of seat misuse. If you do not intend to anchor the tether, don't buy this model.

- All functions of this seat must be used — the harness, the vehicle lap belt and the top tether strap. If the tether isn't firmly attached, the seat won't stay anchored in a crash and the child's head may fly forward, striking the dash or another part of car.

- In a sedan with the safety seat in the rear seat of the auto, the tether must be bolted to the rear package shelf in an area where there is solid metal. Many new autos come with pre-drilled

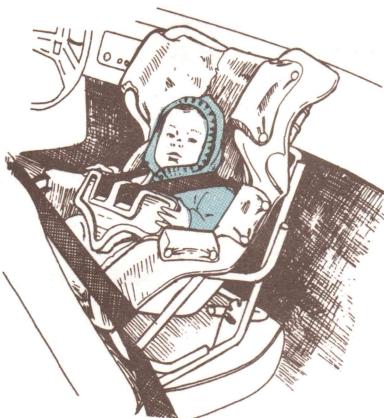
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holes for this purpose. If this seat is in the front seat, the tether can be clipped to the rear seat lap belt with some models. Do not anchor the seat to the back of the front seat or to the rear floor. In a station wagon or hatchback, the tether must be bolted to the load floor with no more than a 45 degree angle between the strap and load floor.



Toddler seat with abdominal shield attached to shoulder straps and crotch strap

• After fitting the child into the harness, always attach the crotch strap to secure the abdominal shield. A common misuse occurs when the child gets into the seat by himself and a parent doesn't check to see if the shield is secure. In a crash, an unanchored shield may become a strangling device, or the child may fly out from under it.



• After the child is in the harness and the harness is attached, snug up the straps by threading them back through the strap hardware.

Protective shield only

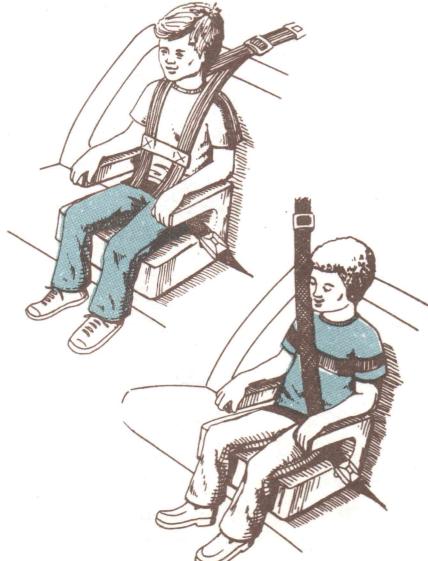
• The C-shaped shield, padded on the inside and secured by the vehicle lap belt which fastens around the front of the shield, usually doesn't have a harness.



• Once the shield is buckled into the back seat, the child can climb in by himself. A disadvantage of the shield is that the child can also climb out by himself in a moving car. Therefore, this seat may require greater parental control.

Booster seat with or without harness

• Booster seats are designed primarily for the child too big for a safety seat but not old enough for adult safety belts.



• A booster seat must be used with the harness if provided and the vehicle lap belt, or with the vehicle lap/shoulder belt. The harness has a tether which must be firmly anchored. Never use a booster seat with only the vehicle lap belt because upper torso support must be provided.

• If using the vehicle lap/shoulder belt, be sure the shoulder belt doesn't cut across the neck or face of the child.

Vehicle lap/shoulder belts

• Adult safety belts can be used when the child can sit in a vehicle without the shoulder strap coming across the face and neck. If the shoulder strap does cut across the face or neck and no other safety seat is available, place the shoulder strap behind the child.

• Position the lap portion of the belt low and pull it snug on the child.

• When securing a child in an adult seatbelt only, never boost him on pillows or cushions. The child can slip out from under the belt in a crash.



• Adult safety belts are better than no restraint at all, even for the young child. But never ride holding a child on your lap, and never strap yourself and a child into the same seatbelt.

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Helping children become less demanding

By Annye Rothenberg

"Mommy!"
"Mommy, come here!" screams Jessica from her bedroom.

In the kitchen, Jessica's mother hears her daughter call and wearily makes her way toward the bedroom. Secretly she wishes she didn't have to answer Jessica, but if she doesn't, the howls will get louder and more frequent.

Is this a good parent/child relationship? Or is it more of a child/slave relationship?

These days many parents do feel like their children's slaves. They feel like they're "on call" as a companion, cook, entertainer, medical technician, educator, and so on. In short, they feel that their children are too demanding.

Why are children so demanding?

Infants need our attention and we get into the habit of going to them when they cry or fuss.

As babies get older, they begin to understand cause and effect; by six months, most babies realize that they can request and receive attention, and so they do!

Now we find ourselves going to our babies and toddlers because they're asking us to — because they're *insisting*.

As parents, we expect our children to learn what their needs are on their own and then ask for them. It comes as a big surprise then to find we have to continually check our children's requests to see if they are *needs* or *demands*.

By "too demanding," parents may mean that children can't play by themselves for very long, or that their requests are too frequent and too insistent. In fact, it is this "demandingness" that

makes it seem to parents that they are always being interrupted, that they can never get the dishes done, never read a magazine article from start to finish, never have a quiet moment.

Why do children interrupt?

There are many reasons why children interrupt parents:

- They have shorter attention spans than adults.
- Children need and enjoy frequent interactions with adults. They have hundreds of questions and comments.
- They're simply not able to play alone for long periods of time.
- Young children are not aware that they're interrupting others in the middle of a thought or the middle of a project like looking up something in a book. (After all, you don't "look" busy.)



Finally, until the age of three years old, most children are not capable of:

- Having elaborate or prolonged play ideas.
- Using fantasy play.
- Verbalizing to themselves about what else they can do or how they can expand what they're doing.

Most children do develop an

increased ability to play alone as they get older. But it may be too late if children's behavior patterns already irritate their parents and other adults around them.

What happens?

Demanding children are not enjoyable to be with. Parents who are continually interrupted and unable to complete a thought or finish a task become frazzled, irritable, and short tempered.

What happens is a nasty cycle: the more parents tune-out the demanding child, the more attention the child demands, increasing the tension and frustration for the whole family. Yet parents need to be able to be with their children and not feel that they are on call at every minute of the day.

What can be done?

Take some time away from parenting. Parents do get worn down from being constantly with their children. Even if it's brief, a time for self enables us to return to our families with more patience and energy. If you feel guilty, remember that you're doing something for your family when you take a break.

Beyond that what can help the problem of demandingness?

- Invest time in teaching your children to be more sensitive to your needs (e.g., "I really want to finish sewing this shirt so your sister can wear it tomorrow"). Let them know that when you're doing something you don't want to be interrupted. When you're finished, you'll be available.

- At the same time, help children learn about the needs and feelings of others. Family life has a rhythm or cycle to it, including both time together and time

alone for each family member.

- Set limits. When your child wants your attention and you're doing something — even if you're just sitting quietly or reading the newspaper — don't just drop what you're doing. Instead, tell your youngster what you're doing and that while you can't be with him or her right now, you will join the child as soon as you're finished.

For example, "Ben, I'm busy reading the newspaper right now but as soon as I'm finished, we'll get your juice."

To babies and toddlers it doesn't appear that you're really "doing anything" when you're reading the newspaper.

Following through

For your child to feel certain that you mean what you say, you must *follow through* and deliver the attention you promised. This is necessary even if your youngster becomes involved in something else.

Teaching about "alone" time

A good way to start helping your child become less demanding — even a child as young as six months old — is to spend some time with him or her, giving your undivided attention. This can be for as long as you want or as short as a few minutes.

Sit near your child and watch him or play along and talk. Let your child know that this is your time together and in a few minutes you are going to do something by yourself.

Before you start your own activity, see if your child needs help finding something to do. Once you're both settled, explain that this is your time alone and your child's time to do something alone.

In the early weeks of teaching,

it will help if you do something active in "your" time. To babies and toddlers it doesn't appear that you're really doing anything when you're reading the newspaper. In other words, you *look* available.

When you've finished your activity, praise your child for playing alone so well and stay with him or her for a few minutes. This will show that there is some predictability in the pattern and that your child can trust what you say.

To make it all work, you'll need to practice the whole process at least a few times a day. Some parents practice over a several-week period for most of a child's awake time so the child can learn more rapidly. Start with just a few minutes each time and build up from there. As children get older, the time periods can become longer.

As parents we need to understand the importance of "alone" time for children, as well as ourselves. It is necessary for us to see its benefits to them or we'll feel too guilty to insist on it.

Teaching consideration

You can also teach children two years and older how to help you help them. For example, a youngster who wants a cup of juice can get the cup while you get the juice.

You can trade jobs. If you're putting away laundry and your child wants a cracker, he or she can continue your job while you go to the kitchen.

Finally, one of the things that irritate parents most is the way a child asks for something. Constant requests to "gimme some crackers!" can be awfully irritating. By the time children are just over two years old, they can learn to say, "Dad, when you have a minute could you get me . . . ?" Just imagine how different you'd feel and act when your child talked to you that way!

Early experiences pay off

Children's needs and demands during the early years change according to their age and stage of development, so many of them are temporary. But it's how you deal with them during the early years that lays down the ground rules for later years.

One of the most common problems teachers report in school is that some children are self-centered, self-indulgent and impulsive. Early attention to "demandingness" may help children later on to learn to wait or to work at something that takes time, such as studying for an hour — not ten minutes — for a test.

Helping children become less demanding and more aware of others' needs and feelings is a valuable lesson.

Demandingness can be a problem, but it's one that can be solved. Children can learn that:

- It's good to have "alone" time.
- There are predictable times when they will have parents' attention.
- Mom and Dad aren't irritated with them, but parents have needs, too.

Helping children become less demanding and more aware of others' needs and feelings is a valuable lesson. One of the benefits is that you and your children will enjoy each other more. That's something we all look forward to!

Annye Rothenberg, child/parent psychologist, is the director of a parent education program at Children's Health Council in Palo Alto, California and author of *Parent-making: A Practical Handbook for Teaching Parent Classes About Babies and Toddlers*.

What are you doing to that child?

By Kim Ronemus

Nine months ago I ventured out on the streets of New York, test-piloting a stroller that carried our one-month old son, Charlie. I was a new mother . . . but I guess that was obvious.

A woman came up to us on the street and said, "That child needs a hat. Why look, poor thing has no hair and he's out without a hat!" I strolled farther, a bit shaken. A man spotted our little caravan and crossed the street to get a closer look. "Babies need hats—their heads are so unprotected. You should never leave the house without one."

When I arrived home I searched around for Charlie's hat. I laid it out on the counter and vowed never to make that mistake again. Taking him for a walk without a hat—what was I thinking of?!

The next day I packed us up, set up the stroller, and off we went again. Of course this time Charlie had his hat on. I was enjoying the freedom of the outside when a woman, barely glancing our way, remarked, "Are you trying to boil that baby? He's probably sweltering in that hat." I stopped dead in my tracks and leaned over the carriage. I pleaded into the questioning eyes of Charlie to give that lady some signal that his mother was not as dumb as she seemed and actually he was quite happy in his hat.

This hat thing was obviously a controversial issue not settled simply by putting one on. So, never sure just how the wind would blow, I carried a hat with me on all of our walks and put it on and took it off as the advice dictated.

When Charlie grew out of androgynous coverings such as

"sacks" and "stretchies," I found that to wear or not to wear a hat was only the beginning of the clothes controversy.

"He should have something on his feet." That was the cry at two months. And, as I quickly found out, socks were not enough. "Not in this cold weather." But then there were those who quaked with horror at the sight of baby shoes. "You should never bind his feet at such a young age!"

In the summer months, when clothes became scant and unimportant, the comments shifted to new topics. His weight was always cause for pause. "Dear, what are you feeding that child?!"—you should dilute that formula he's drinking, it looks way too thick." And, "no wonder he's so fat, if you let him sit in the stroller and eat cookies." I grabbed the cookies out his clenched little fists, tugged the bottle from his mouth—maybe he was a bit fat.

But what should I do when it's 4 o'clock, I'm waiting in a check-out line in the supermarket, and Charlie starts to make shrieks that go in one ear, vibrate around for a bit, and then shoot you straight to the roof? "Poor thing, he's starving, don't you have some little cracker or cookie he can munch on?" comes the calm suggestion from the woman behind the register.

Help!

Last month my husband and I decided to try a new venture into the outside world with Charlie. We took him to a respectable restaurant. (By respectable I mean somewhere between the Waldorf and Wendy's.) I felt so proud as the three of us sat around the table chatting in punctuated single syllables, "Da, Ma, Ba," etc., until our meal was

served. But as I lifted my fork to start eating, I caught the surprised eye of Charlie. Oh, no, I had forgotten to bring any baby food for him! He seemed to realize this at the same instant I did and, while I paled, Charlie broke into his shrieks.

Determined not to panic, I cut my quiche in half and began to feed him. I smiled that the oversized fork and curdled eggs seemed just interesting novelties to Charlie—all parts of this "dining out" experience.

But look out! The woman from the next table had gotten up and was headed in our direction. I knew she'd been watching us all along. And she must have picked up on something or things I was doing that needed immediate correction. I went through in my mind all the rules I might have violated: feeding a baby with a restaurant utensil; introducing a new food in the evening; insufficient clothing in an air-conditioned room.

"You know, I was just remarking to my husband how clever you mothers are today," she said, bending over to get a better look at what Charlie was eating. "Now, we probably would have carted jars of baby food to the restaurant and look at this baby—why, he couldn't be happier eating quiche Lorraine—and goodness knows, it tastes better than 'Turkey and Vegetable Dinner.'"

I smiled gratefully and sat back in my chair, savoring the compliment for a minute. The next bite of quiche Lorraine was served up to Charlie's waiting mouth with absolute confidence—maybe I was catching on.

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The Back Page

Dr. Bob

Positive attitude about doctors contributes to better experiences

In **Growing Child** we often discuss the importance of children developing positive attitudes toward learning. A positive attitude is also important for physical and emotional health.

A parent's attitude toward health, doctors, medicine, and hospitals is the single most influential factor in a child's attitude about these same things. It is important to remember this when you talk about health-related matters.

Statements like: "Don't cry, I won't let the doctor hurt you" or "If you don't behave, I'll have the nurse give you a shot" quickly give a child a negative attitude. He may then misbehave in the doctor's office, making an examination or treatment more prolonged, unrewarding, or perhaps even painful. And these fears, if continually reinforced, may carry over into adolescence and beyond. They are responsible for many adults being "afraid to go to the doctor."

So, in health matters, as in everything else, think before you speak or act. Your child is listening, watching, and learning from you.

Robert E. Hannemann, M.D.

Consumer rights

More and more people are shopping by mail and telephone today as a way to save time. But that also means more complaints and questions about mail order companies.

To help answer questions and explain your rights, the U.S. Postal Service and the American Express Company have published a

pamphlet called **Mail Order Rights**. For a free copy, send your name and address to:

Consumer Information Center
Dept. 603N
Pueblo, Colorado 81009

This publication addresses such problems as:

- when products should be shipped,
- when you have the right to a refund,
- telephone order vs. mail order rights,
- who to contact if you have a problem,
- how to protect yourself before you order,
- how best to pay.

If you deal with a reputable company and know your rights, shopping by mail can be an efficient and positive experience.

Helpful brochures

Here are four very practical, concrete, useful brochures that are loaded with dozens of easy-to-use ideas for helping elementary school-aged children learn at home.

Entitled "Helping Your Child at Home," they cover: reading, spelling, handwriting, and arithmetic — all of the critical skills children need to master. The ideas require no special equipment, only common household items.

To get a **free** set of the four brochures, send a self-addressed, postpaid (39¢ U.S.) business size envelope to:

The Learning Team
20 Commercial Blvd.
Novato, California 94947



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Fun things to do in March

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

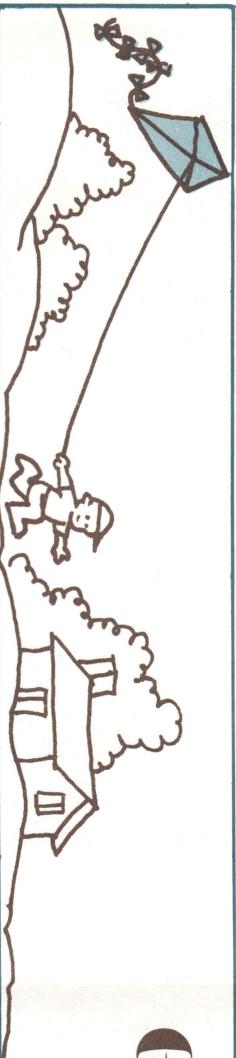
Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Growing Child

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1
Write the word
MARCH in big
letters on a big
piece of paper and
hang in your child's
room.

2

Say "I love you" to
your child every day
this month.

4

Count your child's
teeth.

6

Show Baby how to
touch his finger to
his nose.

7

Take your child to a
free concert.

8

Go outside and tie a
balloon on
Youngster's wrist to
blow in the wind.

3

Read the book,
Noah's Ark, by Peter
Spier.

5

Is there a full-length
mirror in your house
so Youngster can
see himself?

7

Put these words in
their "daytime" order—lunch,
breakfast, dinner.

8

Turn the TV off all
weekend.

9

Look for signs of
spring. (Yippee!)

10

Pretend to be an
animal.

11

Practice "pouring"
an object from one
cup to another.

13

Say the words or,
our, and are. Use
each in a sentence.

14

Fly a kite. If there's
no wind, draw a
picture of a kite.

15

What time of the
day is it when we
get out of bed?

16

Look through a
magazine and find
the color green.

17

St. Patrick's Day—
wear green today.

19

Shake a rattle.
Listen to the noise.
Shake it fast—slow.

21

Make a paper
airplane and fly it to
Baby.

22

Read *The Tale of
Peter Rabbit*, by
Beatrix Potter.

23

Palm Sunday—what
does "palm"
refer to?

24

What sound does a
cow make?

26

Have a pretend
conversation over
the phone.

28

Good Friday.

29

Read *The Tale of
Peter Rabbit*, by
Beatrix Potter.

30

EASTER
Attend the church
of your choice.

31

Sing "Round the
Mulberry Bush"



Growing Parent®

March 1986
Vol. 14 No. 3

When children help cook, dinner is more than a meal

By Marilyn Anstett

Today's lifestyles often mean parents arrive home to face the competing pressures of meal preparation, the needs of children and spouse for attention, and the need to unwind and relax at the end of the work day. You can respond to all of these pressures at the same time by making meal preparation a family affair.

Children love to cook and to do things with their parents. With a little planning, even very young children can be involved in dinner preparation in a way that really helps. By giving children a significant role at this hectic time in the day, the whole family can enjoy a fun, positive effort rather than a time of frayed nerves.

Involving children in daily meal preparation has several payoffs:

- The child is engaged in constructive activity.
- Parent and child have time together.
- A pattern of cooperation develops, and dinner gets on the table.

Here are some ideas that will help make dinnertime preparation more productive:

- Select activities which enable the child to work alone for a reasonable period of time without constant instruction and supervision. This allows you time to work on the rest of the meal and the child can become engrossed in his or her task.
- Give the child adequate work space away from the stove and other heating appliances and outside the kitchen traffic pattern. Gather everything your child will need and get the things you will need out of his or her work area so that you don't have to move the child to open a cupboard or drawer. An apron, special utensils of the child's own, and a special work space all help to emphasize the child's importance in the cooking process.
- Assign specific tasks to each child. Be sure to rotate assignments so that one child doesn't get stuck with a task that may have been fun at first but soon becomes boring. There are jobs no one wants and these should be rotated so that everyone takes a fair share of the work. When more than one child is helping, they may enjoy taking turns with such jobs as salad chef, napkin folder and appetizer server.
- Encourage creativity. Show confidence in the child by giving responsibility for the total outcome of the project. Make sure the task is within the child's ability to perform, but don't limit the child to familiar activities. Trying new things will maintain the child's interest and enthusiasm in working in the kitchen. Be sure to notice and comment on new accomplishments. Your attention is as important as the meal that follows!



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Here's a list of tasks children can learn to do well at early ages:

Shape meatballs.
Mix muffin batter.
Arrange packaged biscuit dough in the baking pan.
Peel carrots and potatoes.
Slice bananas.
Arrange simple individual salads such as cottage cheese and fruits on a bed of lettuce leaves.
Wash vegetables with a vegetable brush.
Use a vegetable spinner to spin dry vegetables for salads and cold plates.
Grease baking dishes.
Arrange toppings on homemade pizza.
Skewer assortments of foods for appetizers, snacks or desserts.
Break and beat eggs for scrambled eggs or omelets.
Make juice and other beverages from frozen or dry concentrates.
Shape dough for drop cookies
Frost cakes or cookies.

Have paper towels or cloths ready near the child's work space so the child can clean up spills without having to depend on you for help. But do offer help and guidance before things get out of hand.

Kitchen safety is an essential consideration when children are cooking. Keep heating appliances and electrical cords away from the child's work space. When your child is old enough to use these appliances, be sure to give instruction on safe procedures and closely supervise the child's first efforts. Provide pot holders or mitts which fit the child's hands when needed.

The tasks you give your child will depend on your family's own food preference and the child's age and capabilities but here are some suggestions to trigger your own imagination.

- Salad preparation is an activity even two-year-olds can do well and enjoy. Small fingers tear bite-size pieces of greens to perfection. If you have a large

salad bowl, the child can add ingredients and toss the salad.

- Young children can butter bread slices for garlic bread or



seasoned toast. A prepared garlic bread sprinkle or Parmesan cheese can be applied liberally. Avoid plain garlic powder or garlic salt in the hands of young children who may have trouble using restraint.

- Arranging a relish tray or appetizer platter is a job children enjoy doing and can do well. Serving a nutritious starter course while the rest of the meal is being prepared is a good way to take the irritable edge off everyone's hunger.

With a little planning and organization, children can soon become genuine mealtime helpers, expanding into more responsible roles as age permits. First results may be imperfect, but long-term benefits will be more impressive. Older children can be given increasing responsibility in the kitchen and may like to be included in menu planning and grocery shopping. Preparing a whole meal may be overwhelming, but being responsible for a specific part of the meal is manageable.

Cooking can become a time of family unity, increasing that precious "quality time" together. Sharing a common activity is a good way to open and maintain communication. For the very young child, being included gives an important sense of contributing to the life of the family.

Most of all, cooking as a family should be fun. It's well worth the effort to turn that hectic time at the end of the day, when everyone arrives home tired and hungry, into a time of cooperative cooking. Few domestic activities offer as many fringe benefits as making dinner a family project.

Marilyn Anstett lives in North Dakota where she works in public relations, cooks with her five children, and enjoys gardening.

Your take-charge toddler takes charge

By Bette Shapiro

Has there ever been a time that you can remember when you did not have charge of your life, when someone else told you what to wear, when to eat, what you could do or could not do? None of us was born independent and the process of gaining and maintaining our independence was, and probably still is, one small battle after another.

When do I start letting my son take charge of his life? How do I start the process of letting go, allowing him to think and choose for himself?

The first time my 2½-year-old stood his ground and stated in no uncertain terms, "I can do it myself," and put on his own socks, he glowed. I could almost see him square his little shoulders as he picked up his pants and struggled into them. "I did it all by myself, Mommy." (So what if the pants were on backwards.)

None of us was born independent and the process of gaining and maintaining our independence was, and probably still is, one small battle after another.

"A positive identity," writes Dorothy Briggs, well-known author of *Your Child's Self Esteem*, "hinges on positive life experience." My goal was clear. Give Jared more opportunity for "positive life experience."

The appropriate place to start was his own room. I eliminated the messy toy box. In its place, I put in shelves to hold plastic containers separating his toys, making them much easier for him to find.

I lowered the bar in his closet to a height that was accessible and I put an extender on the light

switch, as I did in other parts of the house, so he could turn his own light on and off.

In the bathroom, I mounted a toothbrush holder, a soap dish and a three-ounce paper cup dispenser within his reach and gave him his own tube of toothpaste.

Shoes with Velcro fasteners and pants with elastic bands (instead of snaps, buttons and zippers), made getting dressed and undressed another task Jared could add to his growing list of accomplishments.

At the market, I asked the clerk to make a package light enough for my son to carry.

When we do laundry together,



it is Jared's job to find and sort the socks by color and size.

He earns five cents a week opening our garage gate with the remote control (with supervision) and when we go out to breakfast on Sunday mornings, my son likes to pay the cashier and leave the tip.

With each transition of power, there is a period of adjustment and a sense of humor is a "must." For example, Jared's ability to remove his new shoes with Velcro fasteners meant, for the fifth or sixth time during an outing at the shopping mall,

The best way to avoid a battle and let both of us win, is to offer a choice, whenever possible, and be willing and prepared to accept the child's decision.

some kind person would tap me on the shoulder and say, "I think your baby dropped this."

I also learned to accept my limitations, which were reached the morning my budding artist removed all the paper cups from their dispenser and used them, along with a full tube of toothpaste, to create a collage all over the bathroom walls and floor.

I learned the best way to avoid a battle and let both of us win is to offer my son a choice, whenever possible, and be willing and prepared to accept his decision.

I thank him and let him know that his efforts and contributions count. The most challenging part of "our" development, is giving him the room to make mistakes while teaching him it's all right to ask for help.

"Helping children build high self-esteem" says Ms. Briggs, "is the key to successful parenthood." Is the conscious effort worth it? When my son looks at me after carrying in his package and says proudly "I've got muscles, Mommy, I'm strong," yes!

When he counts out his five nickels needed for a ride on the merry-go-round from money he has earned himself, yes!

When I've sat down for the first time in the day only to realize I forgot to turn out the kitchen light and ask my 2½-year-old son to turn it off for me, and he does, you bet it is!

Bette Shapiro is a graduate of Immaculate Heart College and currently a part-time student at Santa Monica College and Jared's full-time mom. She has worked as a taxi driver, farm hand, barber, secretary, governess, and pre-school teacher.

A peer group for Mom

By Joan Wester Anderson

It had been one of "those" days, the kind that every mother dreads. A feverish preschooler attached to my leg, an ominous thump-thump in the washing machine, a baby who fussed despite cuddling, another overdue bill in the mail to add to the stack. Frustrated, I fell back on the obvious solution: I phoned a friend.

"Sounds like you're having a rough time," Betty sympathized. "Let me catch the hamster, mop up this water and get the one-year-old out of the dishwasher. Then you can tell me all about it."

I did. Betty listened with warmth and understanding (from the sound of it, her day was a lot like mine), and when the conversation ended, I was feeling better. We hadn't solved any of our problems, but in listening and reassuring each other, we'd received the comfort we needed and the strength to continue our nurturing roles.

Peer groups are vital.

Looking back, I believe I survived and enjoyed the years of small-child raising primarily because I had a loosely-knit support group, other mothers to turn to when doubts loomed large, women to share the common bonds of conversation and laughter. But what about today's young women, especially those engaged in full-time parenting?

Our mobile society, the dropping birth rate, and the rising number of women in the work force all combine to produce a sense of isolation for the mother who remains at home. Who is she talking to? Where is she finding the female companionship that is vital to her sense of well-being?

Are friends really that important? Child experts believe they are, because mothers undoubtedly set the tone of the home, and a woman who is frustrated, lonely and confused (and feeling guilty about it all) can have an adverse effect on those around her. By contrast, if she makes adult communication and companionship a high priority, she discovers that her entire life is enriched. "What keeps me happy keeps the family happy, too," one woman explains. "And that's a good investment for everyone."

Outside activities can also provide positive learning opportunities, especially for first-time mothers who have no experience in child-rearing. "Reading Dr. Spock or talking to my pediatrician doesn't give me half the lift that the bridge club does," another mom reports. "All the

other members have the same little-kid problems that I do, and comparing notes is tremendously helpful. I go home realizing that I'm a pretty good parent after all!"

In addition to advice and understanding, friends can also be an outlet when anger threatens to erupt. They can reinforce feelings of self-worth and confidence, and offer both hope and the chance to laugh at oneself. These encounters bring zest to a woman's life, the affirmation she needs to be the kind of parent she's trying to be. Make new friends.

If you're a young isolated mother who's depending on your husband for most communication, female friendships can help to bridge the gap. Where can you find the pals who can support and sustain you during these challenging years?

- Check your church bulletin or newsletter. Many congregations are beginning to regard motherhood as a special ministry

I survived and enjoyed the years of small-child raising primarily because I had a loosely-knit support group, other mothers to turn to when doubts loomed large, women to share the common bonds of conversation and laughter.



Real and lasting friendships require an investment of time, and need to be explored through many tentative conversations as each learns to trust the other.

and often provide programs just for you. It may be a weekly discussion or study group (with babysitting provided) or an informal Moms' Morning where women meet just to chat. Such gabfests may seem unproductive, but experts now realize that they provide mothers with an emotional lift which ultimately benefits family life.

If your church has no such program, consider starting one. You'll need two rooms — the second for babysitting — and someone who's willing to sit for a per-child fee. Mothers can bring toys and rotate coffeepot duty. A small ad in the church paper will probably attract several participants also looking for new friends and eager to get away from it all.

- If you don't belong to a church, scout your local newspaper for community activities. Seminars or classes on parenting are sometimes held in park district or school facilities, and

offer the chance for mothers to meet and learn at the same time. If events are available at night, dads and employed mothers can also attend; they, too, need the opportunity to socialize and compare notes. Your area may also sponsor a Newcomer's Club or Homeowner's Association which welcomes both couples and single membership.

- Consider your own interests and try to develop one or two. Do you bowl or swim? Would you enjoy an aerobics class? Have you always wanted to learn more about home decor or local politics or English literature? Are you planning to resume your career soon and need to brush up your skills?

Most communities sponsor a variety of adult education classes that can get you out of your kitchen and into a mainstream of conversation and fun. In addition to meeting friends with similar interests, developing your talents will blow the pre-

schooler-induced cobwebs from your mind, and give you a sense of personal accomplishment.

- Don't overlook toddler programs. If you're feeling blue, maybe your youngster is, too. Watch for library story hours, morning play sessions and other activities that naturally attract young mothers. You may find one or two who are willing to car-pool or even child-swap on occasion.

- Once you have connected with a few women who seem to share your lifestyle and values, take the plunge and host a brief morning coffee, preferably during warm weather when tots can play outside. (If you haven't room for many guests, invite everyone to meet at a nearby park, and "bring your own thermos.") This is a fine way to "get the ball rolling" and perhaps discuss future outings. Follow up your first coffee with a phone call to at least one mother, offering to exchange children next week or go shopping together. Soon your telephone will be ringing too, and your life will seem fuller and more rewarding.

The effort is worth it.

Outgoing women have an easier time breaking the ice than shy moms do, but it's difficult for everyone at first. Real and lasting friendships require an investment of time, and need to be explored through many tentative conversations as each learns to trust the other. But the effort is well worth it. Not only do friends assuage the loneliness of housebound women, they also help us to become better mothers. Knowing that a warm and supportive peer group is standing by may be all that's needed to turn one of "those" days into a positive experience for everyone.



Joan Wester Anderson is a wife, mother of five and freelance author of books, articles and short stories, many of them dealing with family topics.

When your guide is under two

By Alicia Nitecki

The slug was a good five inches long, black and textured like a long piece of rain-washed tire. It was lying near the hedge-row bordering a small field, biting the leaf of a potentilla. Its mouth was very wide, a half inch, I would guess, and its jaws were powerful. One swift bite broke off an inch of leaf, which it slowly and methodically chewed and swallowed.

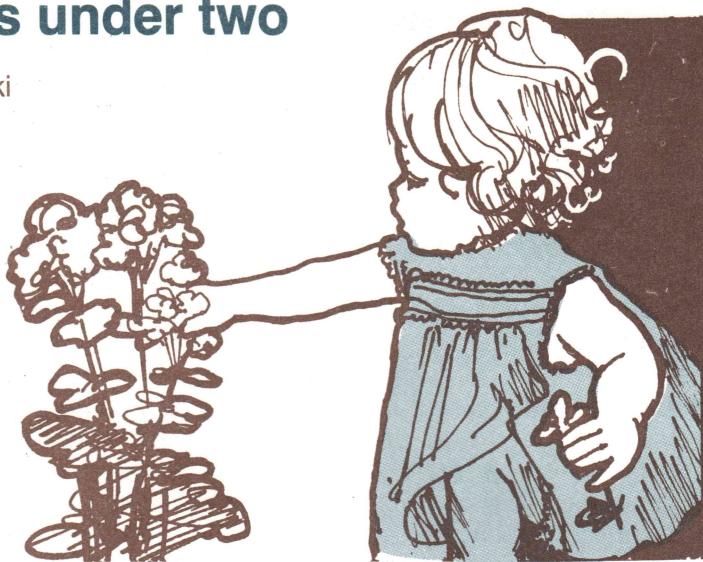
I watched, fascinated, wishing I could get over my squeamishness and poke my finger out for the slug to snap at. How seriously it took its supper, how stolidly it ate, and how precarious the life of that little unloved bit of nature. The sight delighted me.

I would not have made the time to watch slugs if we hadn't brought our 18-month-old daughter with us on vacation to Austria. We slowed our steps to match her toddle; she quickened our perceptions and our memories.

In Vienna, she paused in front of every figure on every baroque building. Greek gods became daddies, the Empress Maria Theresa, resplendent in her chariot, a mummy taking her cherubic babies for a ride, accompanied by their kittens and their horses.

She caressed the grillwork on basement windows I didn't know existed and led her father three times into St. Stephen's Cathedral to see the votive candles and recite for her again Beatrix Potter's "Ninny-Nanny-Net-ticoat."

Through her we learned that Vienna is a city of poodles and German shepherds, of storekeepers and restauranteurs who provide bowls of water for their patrons' dogs, of diminutive old



Our daughter would take her grandmother by the hand and lead her into the wet grass to look for snails. She walked head down, then suddenly she'd lean over, wave, and say, "Hi, snail."

women who scatter birdseed on the barren ground between the chestnut trees on the Ring.

Mornings in the Alps she would take her grandmother by the hand and lead her into the wet grass to look for snails. She walked head down, then suddenly she'd lean over, wave, and say, "Hi, snail." The unmowed meadow by our hotel, we quickly discovered, was alive with snails, just as the lawn of the house we stayed at in London was with spiders, and those, too, she greeted politely.

Trailing up a mountain at her pace, we saw an intricately patterned brown and yellow lizard, a motif from the Book of Kells come alive; and I remembered walking through the parched hills in the south of France with my grandfather when I was little older than she to look for dragons and seeing green and gold lizards lying on the rocks and being disappointed that the dragons were so small.

Some afternoons we lay on the grass and the games of my

childhood came back to me. I made the daisies she picked into chains for her to wear around her neck or wrist. We held buttercups up to each other's chins, telling from the echo of their yellow on our skin whether or not we liked butter. I taught her how to tell the time by dandelion clocks.

Her schedule prevented us from spending our evenings on sophisticated city pleasures. Instead, we took walks in the hills behind the hotel and in the gathering dusk saw deer grazing on the fringes of the forest and a fox scurrying across the road between the meadow and the wood.

"She must have slowed you down when you were traveling," people say to me. I smile. Yes, she did. Thanks to her we had time to admire grillwork and delight in slugs.

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How I learned to love reading

"My parents came to New York from Russia when I was three. They knew the Cyrillic and Hebrew alphabets, but not the Roman, so I learned to read under difficulties. I memorized a jump-rope rhyme with the letters of the alphabet, but I thought they were just nonsense syllables. When I realized it was the alphabet, I got older kids to write the letters down for me, and I would practice writing them. I would ask people to read what I had written, and they would just laugh. But one man explained that I had written a combination of letters that couldn't be pronounced, and he sounded the letters out for me. From that I learned that, in most cases, the name of the letter gave its sound. It was phonics, not that I knew it. I also have a clear memory of taking a train to Coney Island. In the train was a sign that said, 'Coney Island.' I could read the first word, but the second one had me stumped until I realized it must say 'island.' From that I learned two things. First, that there are such things as silent letters, and second, how people know which train to take.

"When I was six, my father got me a library card. I couldn't tell what books to read, so I read an awful lot of things. I read rapidly and went back for more: By the time I was in my teens, I had a whole library inside me. Among

my favorite books were the Dr. Doolittle books, anything by Dumas, and *The Pickwick Papers*, which I've read 26 times.

"I've written books, both fiction and nonfiction, on all sorts of subjects, and I attribute that largely to the fact that I read widely, and without supervision, when I was young. And I've always had a strong desire to read. I don't know what puts that desire into people. You should encourage kids to read just in case they have the desire, but if they don't, heroic measures won't make any difference.

"There are things you can do, though. Always make it possible for a kid to read a variety of things. If he can get started on books you consider not so good, he might go on to other things. Trash is not trash if it's the entering wedge to something better. What can parents do? First, there should be books in the house. And parents themselves should be readers — children should see their parents reading. Finally, reading shouldn't be made a chore, something the kid has to do. A book is immensely valuable to a young person if he finds it himself — but you can make it available for him to find."

Isaac Asimov, author of 323 books on science, science fiction, and other subjects

"My father and mother read to me when I was a child. During those times, I am sure I felt the warmth of their closeness and affection. When I learned to read to myself, I noticed that many of those same feelings stayed with me, so that even now as I read, I am able to sense those early good feelings that will always be associated with reading. There is nothing more important in the learning of reading than having someone you love, love to read to you."

Fred Rogers, of the *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood* television show

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"I believe parents ought to start reading aloud to their children right after they start them on pablum. Children can look at pictures and begin to understand the words for what they see. I believe children should be encouraged to keep on reading through infancy, childhood, and adolescence — not only by themselves, but with their parents, too. Like every other important value in life, the value of reading and learning is taught at home.

"Libraries, of course, have a special role to play in furthering the cause of reading. Many of us can think back to the days of our youth when the town library — a legacy of Mr. Carnegie — was an enchanted if somewhat forbidding place to visit. A musty smell rose from the stacks. The librarian, bun firmly planted on top of her head, ruled with an iron hand. Everyone whispered. The 'good' books were kept under lock and key. When you got right down to it, it often took a particularly inquisitive and dedicated youngster to break through these barriers to discover the joy of books and reading — aside from the lucky or affluent group who grew up with books in their home and in their possession. I'm delighted that libraries of all kinds are sweeping away these cobwebs and bringing the world of books into the here and now.

"I know from my own experience that there is a more personal reason to read than getting good grades or understanding and contributing to society. I find that reading does more for my psyche and welfare than anything else. It gives pleasure and even inner peace. I implore you to read, read, read — to get the habit and keep it all your lives, to hand it on to your children."

Katharine Graham, chairman of the board, The Washington Post Co.

Fun things to do in April

So you're going to move . . .

By Joan Wester Anderson

Your two-year-old loves her Toddler Gym class; the baby is finally sleeping through the night; you've joined a local bridge club and made many new friends. One evening, your husband comes home, bursting with news. The company has promoted him to a new job — 1500 miles away. Your family will have to move.

If you haven't faced a situation like this, you soon may. Almost 50% of Americans change addresses in any five-year period due to job transfers, voluntary relocations or simply buying a bigger dwelling. And while adults can view a move as positive, despite occasional misgivings, it's not as easy for children. Being uprooted from a secure and familiar environment can be traumatic for a youngster, and problems involving stress and worry may surface. If you are facing a move, how can you calm your children's fears, and make

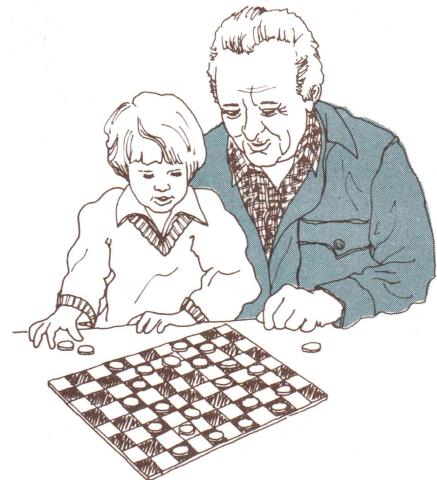
the transition an enriching experience for everyone?

Prepare your child.

An infant won't object to a new house — he'll be happy wherever Mommy and Daddy are! But if your child is eighteen months or older, she deserves to be told as much about the plans as she can understand.

Ignoring the situation won't help; your toddler is bound to notice all those packing crates in the living room or overhear friends or relatives discussing the move. More important, small children need information in order to come to terms with their own emotions. Even though a two- or three-year-old cannot understand all the details, she deserves to know what's happening.

Check out some library books that deal with the moving experience, and read them to your youngster. Hang photos of the



Adults can view a move as positive, but it's not as easy for children.

new house on the refrigerator. When questions come, answer them honestly, and don't paint a false picture. "Aren't those funny-looking trees?" or "It rains a lot in Seattle, you know" is a better approach than pretending everything will be exactly the same as it was.

Expect occasional tears and protests, acknowledge them with a hug and an "It's okay to feel that way, honey," but keep your own attitude upbeat and enthusiastic. Children take their cues from the adults around them, and if you are obviously tense and miserable about leaving, your offspring will be, too. Instead, stress the positives — the big back yard, the warmer climate, the chance to decorate new bedrooms. And do reassure two- and three-year-olds that the family will be together in the new

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house (small children sometimes harbor a vague suspicion that they will be left behind).

Involve your child.

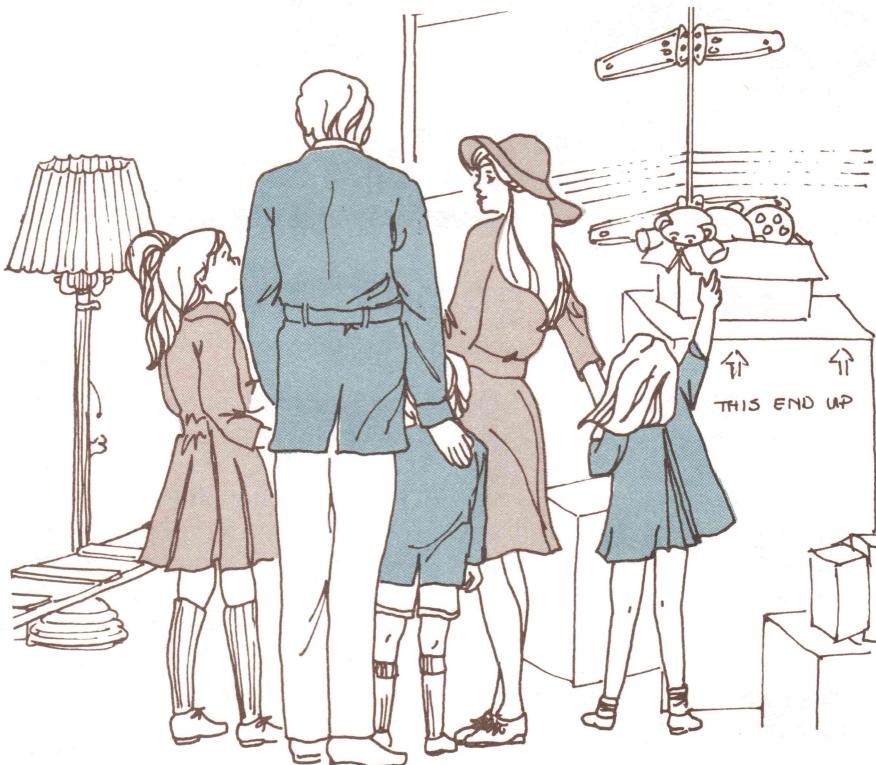
If you are arranging a garage sale, allow your toddler to "help" by putting price stickers on items, or carrying them to display tables. Enlist her aid in simple tasks she can do like packing unbreakables or folding curtains. Ask her opinion, too — "Should we take this old chair with us?" "Do you want to leave a welcome drawing for the new family?" Be sure to provide a box that she can fill with her special treasures to unpack as soon as you reach your destination.

Experts believe that a young child adjusts more easily to a move if she can participate in the preparations, and can watch familiar items being loaded and shipped from the old house to the new. Such an arrangement helps her face reality, and feel more secure about the change. If you have a baby, however, he'll be happier at a friend's house for a day or two before the move — and you'll be more relaxed, too.

Make the Big Day special.

Flying is by far the easiest way to travel with small children. But if your move involves an automobile trip — and most do — plan to make the journey as relaxed and pleasant as possible. Keep disposable formula, diapers, treated cleaning tissues, fruit and salted crackers (helpful for car sickness) nearby; place pillows and your toddlers' favorite stuffed animals in the back seat. You might also pre-pack a "goody bag" for each preschooler, including games, crayons and coloring books and other items that take time to use.

Infants, lulled by the movement of the car, are usually good travelers, but preschoolers tire easily when confined. That's why you should stop every two hours



A young child adjusts more easily to a move if she can participate in the preparations.

for a "rest break," where small children can use the bathroom and stretch. And plan to stop driving by 4 p.m. each day; this gives the family a chance to eat a more leisurely dinner, walk a bit, use the motel pool and fall asleep early.

Breaking the drive takes longer, but adds a touch of adventure to your move. "When we stop again, we'll have hamburgers in a restaurant" or "The next time we stop, you can go swimming" turns a tedious journey into a mini-vacation for children, and allows everyone to arrive in a more relaxed condition.

Consider child's needs.

Despite the chaos, show him the bathroom and flush the toilet a few times (preschoolers can be quite frightened of unfamiliar plumbing if Mom or Dad are busy

elsewhere). Take him to his room, and explain where his bed and toys will be. Point out a safe vantage point where he can observe all the activity without getting in anyone's way (and ask the movers to unload the playpen or crib as soon as possible so Baby can be safely confined).

Once possessions are unloaded, organize your child's room first, before starting on the kitchen or other areas. Let him unpack his "treasure box," make up his bed and see that clothes and playthings are available. Providing a comfortable refuge right away gives your youngster a place to go during the next few days while you are busy.

After an uprooting, it's common for young children to regress into habits such as thumb-sucking, wetting pants or climbing into bed with Mom and Dad in the middle of the night.

Treat such episodes lightly. Concentrate instead on introducing your child to his new surroundings.

One mother took a half hour each day to simply "explore" with her toddler; one morning they covered every inch of the back yard, discussing the garden and where the swing set should

go. On other occasions, they strolled around the block or visited the park. At the end of three weeks, her son was again dry at night, and happily involved in new activities.

Moving is never easy. But children can adjust and even benefit by the experience if their feelings are taken seriously. Listen to

your child, hug and reassure her often and allow for her special needs during this time period. Then the potential for a successful move will be much greater for everyone.

Joan Wester Anderson is a wife, mother of five and freelance author of books, articles and short stories, many of them dealing with family topics.

Countdown to moving day

Your children need TLC before a move — and so do you! Here's a planning calendar to help cut chaos on moving day:

Six weeks ahead.

Find and book a moving company. Change your address on magazine subscriptions, credit cards, insurance policies. Inspect storage areas for seasonal items you may want to discard. Set aside for disposal.

Five weeks.

Collect boxes and pack china, books, bric-a-brac and paintings (tape hangers to back). Label boxes with contents and room. Notify schools of the move, and arrange for transfer of records. Gather medical records, and ask physician to recommend doctors in your new area.

Four weeks.

Continue sorting and packing non-essentials. Box out-of-season clothes and strip shelves. Host a garage sale, or donate cast-offs to charity (keep a receipt for tax purposes). Use up the contents of your freezer. Begin a search for friends or relatives willing to keep your baby and/or toddler for a few days prior to the move, or at least, on moving day.

Three weeks.

Make travel arrangements, pack "goody bags" for children, visit friends to exchange borrowed items. Give away plants, get information on shipping pets (or consider donating them to loving families).



Two weeks.

Pack all clothes except what you will wear during the last week, pack kitchen and bath accessories. Have the car checked for the journey. Take a nap occasionally when your toddlers nap — you will need plenty of energy when moving day arrives!

One week.

Buy only necessary groceries; finish freezer contents. Set aside clothes to be worn on moving day, pack a suitcase with wardrobes for traveling. Set aside a few empty boxes for last-minute loading. Assemble another box to accompany you in the car, containing paper plates, plastic utensils, coffee pot and coffee, soap, toilet paper, sponges, canned snack foods, fruit, disposable formula and diapers and a small bag holding valuables.

On moving day.

Pack car. Inspect rooms, closet and outdoor areas as the movers finish loading; be sure all items have been taken. Give complete and accurate directions to the van driver, turn water off, lock doors and windows.

Say good-bye to the old . . . and hello to the new!

—J.W.A.

Nothing to do

By Sally Nurss

I once had lunch with a preschool girl who could peel, slice, and eat a banana with a knife and fork. "I learned it in my Thursday 'Manners for Young Misses' class," she confided between bites. "My mom really has to rush to get me to soccer practice on time afterwards, but it's the only day we could fit it in — I have something going on every day."

Craft class, ballet lessons, story hour, soccer practice and banana peeling. No time was being wasted in that young life. Or was it? Maybe there was one skill she was missing out on, one more important than banana peeling. I wondered if this self-possessed young girl knew how to deal with free time. Unfortunately, before I could ask, her car pool arrived and ended our visit.

After she left, I thought about how our society places a high value on accomplishments and skills. Often in our eagerness to provide opportunities for our children, we end up taking something away from them. Somewhere in the rush between car pool and class, the time for childhood is lost.

A friend of mine who works in a book store says she often feels a twinge of guilt at the sight of all the new books urging parents to raise "successful" children by providing enriching experiences outside the home. "I never took my kids to every activity our town offered. They must have missed out on a great deal — although they didn't seem bored," she said recently.

And she's right. They weren't bored. She gave them time to play. While they played they learned how to follow an idea through to the end. They learned how to initiate their own activities. Today, despite — or

perhaps because of — a lack of scheduled activities in their childhood, her children are imaginative, disciplined, and altogether "successful" young adults.

In years past it was expected that children would naturally spend their time playing. More recently, our society seems to be saying, "Learn to dance, learn to read, learn to swim — all before the age of five. Hurry." Therefore, children's lives become tightly scheduled with lessons, rehearsals, and other organized experiences. One would think such children would never have time to be bored; but oddly enough, that's exactly what an overly busy schedule can lead to.

"There's nothing to do," children claim. And we're astonished! What? Nothing to do? How can that be with all the activities, sports events, and lessons we drive them to?

Well, sometimes the words "nothing to do" mean, "Usually an adult plans what I'm supposed to do next. I don't know how."

Sometimes they mean, "It's been a busy day. I'm overtired. I need you."

And sometimes "nothing to do" means, "If I start something, I'll probably have to put it away and go somewhere before I'm finished."

We forget what that can feel like. But suppose someone ordered you to rip out the 15 rows of knitting you had just finished because it was time to go to a meeting. You probably wouldn't feel much like returning to your knitting later (and one could hardly blame you for acting a bit churlish at the meeting).

A child who begins to play with something that interests him, perhaps a block building, may react in much the same way. He might also decide, "Why start something if I am not going to be able to finish it?" After a number



Often in our eagerness to provide opportunities for our children, we end up taking something away from them. Somewhere in the rush between car pool and class, the time for childhood is lost.

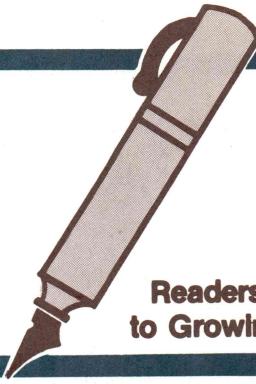
of such experiences, that child may decide it's better not to begin, or become very involved in his own interests. Indeed, he may then have "nothing to do."

Both research and common sense tell us that people don't develop long attention spans by being interrupted. Breaking in on a child's play to involve him in too many directed activities, no matter how enriching they seem to be, can only undermine his attention span and weaken his ability to think of interesting things to do.

When a child is fortunate enough to have a parent who values his right to daily play time, he may lose the opportunity to become a preschool soccer star or a world class banana peeler. On the other hand, he may gain something far more important: time for his own childhood.

Sally Nurss is an instructor in Child Care and Development at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, Illinois and has a MEd in Child Development from Erikson Institute in Chicago.

Growing Dear Child



Readers write
to Growing Child

The Letter Box

Can you recommend any good books or other sources of information about how to help children deal with long separations from their father?

My husband is a naval officer and has been on one ship or another the entire length of our marriage. We're faced with frequent moves and separations that can last six months or longer.

It's difficult to cope with our children 24 hours a day during my husband's absences. We seldom live anywhere long enough to become close friends with neighbors or church members and family members live out of state.

My husband plans to make the Navy a career, so this way of life will be our way of life for some time to come.

As you can see, this is hard on all of us. Any suggestions?

A Navy Wife

Isolation contributed to child's late talking

Our daughter, Robin, although not necessarily being slow in any other phase of development, has been slow in learning to talk.

When she was just 15 months old, the doctor asked how many words she was saying. The answer was none. At this point I wasn't overly concerned but Robin's doctor was.

He scheduled her for a hearing test which proved to be positive. Then he said to wait until she was 18 months before becoming excited. At 18 months she still wasn't talking. At 20 months he recommended that we take her to a child speech therapist. After filling out forms and having lengthy conversations with the development center, we discovered that our insurance company would not pay for any portion of the costs involved which were to be in the neighborhood of \$75.00 per hour. Since we are not at all financially secure at this time we decided to postpone any testing until she turned two.

Meanwhile, we took a short vacation around our state — staying in campgrounds. This had been just about the first opportunity Robin had had to play with other children on a daily basis. We live on a farm and, because we are older parents, know few couples with children as young as Robin. Well, to make a long story short, she began talking. She went from a vocabulary of three words to one of over thirty words in ten days. I know that she is still behind but she is rapidly catching up.

I know there are other parents out there experiencing the same fears — that something might be wrong with their child. We went through a lot of sleepless nights worrying about Robin! But I feel that in our case Robin's problem stemmed from the fact that she had almost no contact with children her age and she never really needed to talk because we always anticipated her every want and didn't force her to try.

Susan C. DePew
St. Helens, OR

Acquiring language not an automatic response

The on-going discussion about child development raises several important issues.

First, as parents we need to be comfortable with our youngster's pediatrician. Any parent who feels intimidated or ill at ease might do well to find another doctor.

Second, parents know their children best and should pay attention to their instincts. Our son was always on the "late" end of the developmental scale. We finally got professional help and testing. The speech pathologist we were referred to has been a great source of help in giving us simple, effective suggestions for increasing our son's verbal abilities and reassuring us his speech would eventually be normal.

Jacob is now almost four and talks a blue streak. He still has some catching up to do and may need therapy to correct articulation problems, but he's definitely on the right track. Acquiring language is not automatic and I would urge other parents with similar concerns to seek good professional help.

Elaine L. Diamond
Los Angeles, CA

"Dear Growing Child" is a forum for our readers to share their personal thoughts, opinions, comments and experiences. We welcome your responses to questions that appear periodically. The letters published do not necessarily represent the views of Growing Child.

All letters to the editor will be treated as having been submitted for publication. If you do not want your correspondence published, please specify this in your letter. Names withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for publication.

Learning to get along with others

By Erna Holyer

Child psychologists say that social learning is the basis of a person's identity and this process begins early in life. The visits of relatives, along with my mother's positive interpretations taught me some of the most valuable lessons a child can learn — how to get along with a variety of people.

In my mind's eye, I still can see Papa's old aunt, sitting on the straight-backed chair she favored. She was a Victorian leftover who scorned modern woman's "shocking" clothes, smoking, and changing values.

Once seated, she'd beckon me to her side, rummage in her purse and extract a bar of the blackest cooking chocolate a kid ever tasted. With a gracious smile, she'd offer me her gift.

"Why does she bring me that awful bitter chocolate, Mama? Why doesn't she bring milk chocolate?" I wailed the moment she departed.

Mother chose her words carefully. "You mustn't ever show Auntie that you don't appreciate her gift," she said. "Papa's aunt lived on a farm as a child, and cooking chocolate was the only kind sold at the country store. Many times she wished she could buy that chocolate, but she had no money. Now she brings you the very thing she wanted for herself."

I thought about that . . . and hope that my "Thank you, Auntie" carried more enthusiasm after Mother's explanation.

Mother's sister, Aunt Therese, usually visited after the first snow. Used to commanding a large family, she gave orders right and left. She also indicated I was a rather useless child and

more than once told me that *her* children really obeyed. I kept out of her way.

One day I found myself face to face with my bossy aunt. On leaving the kitchen, Mother had said, "Why don't you heat the tea kettle on the gas stove, Therese. I'll be back soon."

When I handed Aunt Therese the matches, she turned pale and quickly fled the kitchen. My indomitable Aunt Therese was afraid of lighting a gas stove!

She was also afraid of the dark, so she always took the morning train home, making certain she'd arrive in broad daylight. Once she missed that train and stayed over a full day rather than risk a dusky walk home.

Thanks to my parents, I learned that there were different people in this world beyond the people I knew in my immediate environment.

When I snickered at my aunt's fears, Mother stopped me. "You mustn't ever laugh at somebody who's afraid, child. It's hard to be afraid."

Cousin Ann clung to me during summer vacation. Fresh from the farm and a year younger than I, she asked the most trying questions.

"Show your cousin around and explain things to her," Mother kept coaxing. I opened drawers and closet doors. I showed my treasured possessions and secret hideaways.

Yet, when I visited Cousin Ann, she wouldn't let me touch her toy box. "Mamma," I complained on returning home, "Ann didn't share *anything* with me!"

"Pity poor Ann," said Mother. "Ann is an only child and not used to sharing. You're lucky. You have an older sister and

friends next door."

After mulling over Mother's words, I found it difficult to remain angry at my cousin.

Thanks to my parents, who unwittingly used relatives as teaching tools, I learned that there were different people in this world beyond the people I knew in my immediate environment.

Because of my relatives' visits, I have friends I might otherwise have passed up. Papa's aunt instilled in me respect and tenderness for old age. Aunt Therese made me see that even strong persons can have some human frailty. Cousin Ann introduced me to compassion.

Any parent can use relatives as teaching tools. Although the various personalities may perplex a child for a time, parents can positively interpret these early impressions and equip the growing child for dealing successfully with diverse people.

That people do not come in generic packages is most easily learned while the mind is young. (Research suggests that as much intellectual growth takes place before a child reaches five, as will occur within the next thirteen years.) Early exposure to a variety of individual behaviors can acquaint a child with people's peculiarities. Experts say that feelings associated with early experiences resurface when a child meets similar people or situations and provide inner guidance.

Once we have been exposed to a certain person, pondered about that individual's possible motivation and come to grips with that, we can deal with this particular type of person again.

Erna Holyer is an author of ten children's books and contributor to anthologies published by the educational divisions of Reader's Digest and Encyclopaedia Britannica.

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The Back Page

Best for parent to conceal concern about child's diet

New York — Today's problem eater may grow up to be tomorrow's nutrition fanatic, specialists are able to assure parents. There seems to be no solid evidence that childhood food fads set up dietary patterns followed in adulthood.

Parents' grim attempts to get a balanced diet down their balky youngsters only prolong children's preference for limited and odd foods. A Canadian study of 75 families showed that the parents who tried hardest to feed their children the right stuff had the fussiest eaters. And even the pickiest were absolutely healthy.

The researchers, Patricia Pliner of University of Toronto and Marcia Pelchat of Washington College, Chestertown, Maryland, warn parents against showing children how much they care about what they eat. "You give a child a very powerful tool for manipulating you."

*Research Review
Volume 3 Number 13
September, 1985*

CORRECTION

In the November, 1985, issue of *Growing Parent*, the information about subscriptions for the magazine, **Twins**, was incorrect.

The correct subscription rates are:
\$18.00 per year
\$21.00 per year for Canadian subscribers.

Twins is published bi-monthly by:
Twins Magazine, Inc.
8910 — 62nd Terrace
Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66202

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Growing Parent & Growing Child published monthly at 22 N. Second Street, Lafayette, IN 47902. Subscription rate \$15.95 yearly. Third class postage paid at Lafayette, IN 47902. ISSN: 0193-8037

Baby toys and crib exercisers recalled by manufacturers

F.J. Strauss Company, Inc. of North Bergen, New Jersey, has announced a voluntary recall of three styles of baby toys.

Three items are involved: Style #29/2 — "Big Barrel," which was sold in a white package with a one-piece red barrel on the outside. This toy has two-piece orange, green, white, yellow, blue and red barrels of various sizes that fit into each other.

The second style, #29/5 "Magic Clown," is a plastic blue and yellow ball with a red colored clown figure sitting on top. The third is #29/7 "Big Bead Rattle," which has six plastic ovals on a nylon string forming a loop connected to a white plastic handle.

These toys are banned under the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Small Parts and Rattle Requirements because they have parts which are small enough to lodge in an infant's throat and cause obstruction of the airway.

Danara International, Ltd., South Hackensack, New Jersey, announced a voluntary recall of two styles of baby crib exercisers because of excess levels of lead in the paint on the products.

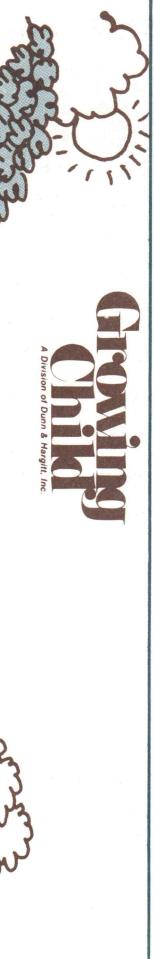
Two crib exercisers are involved. The Winnie the Pooh exerciser, Model Number 15011, has a wooden cross bar with plastic straps attached to metal springs at each end of the bar. The wooden image of Pooh is suspended from the wooden cross bar along with wooden beads and plastic rings. The Smurf exerciser, Model Number 30949, is similar to the Winnie the Pooh exerciser except that a blue plastic Smurf is suspended from the wooden cross bar.

Consumers should remove these products from use immediately and either discard them or return them to the retailer where purchased for a full refund.



Fun things to do in May

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | |
| 1 MAY DAY Pick a basket full of fresh flowers. | 2 What kind of noise does a duck make? | 3 SUN DAY Sit outside and enjoy the sun. | | | | |
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| 3 SUN DAY Sit outside and enjoy the sun. | | | | | | |
| 4 Drink apple juice through a straw. | 5 Read <i>The Runaway Bunny</i> , by Margaret Wise Brown. Talk about the story. | 6 Talk about sharing and what it means. | 7 Listen to a soothing radio program before bedtime. | 8 Make a Mother's Day card to send to Grandma. | 9 Kick your legs as high as you can. Mom and Dad too! | 10 Talk about what you did today. |
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| 11 MOTHER'S DAY Take Mom out for lunch. | 12 Give Baby scraps of material to feel and examine. | 13 Sing a song with silly words. | 14 Each family member tells one thing they like about everyone else. | 15 Play with small blocks. | 16 Name the colors of your shoes. | 17 Tape record your voice and play the recordings while Baby lies in the crib. |
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| 18 Is there a toy library in your town? | 19 Take a bubble wand into the bathtub to blow bubbles. | 20 Victoria Day in Canada. | 21 Make a caterpillar out of an egg carton. | 22 Play catch with a sponge ball. | 23 Find four things in the house that are yellow. | 24 Read books tonight instead of watching TV. |
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| 25 Day of the Indy 500. Look for a picture of a race car in a magazine or a newspaper. | 26 Ask Baby where his belly button is. | 27 Go outside and walk barefoot in a mud puddle. Feel the mud squish between your toes! | 28 Look for things in the kitchen that are big and little. | 29 Play peek-a-boo with a scarf. | 30 MEMORIAL DAY Have a picnic outside. | 31 Go to a neighborhood playground. |
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How to streamline your home: Getting rid of the overload

By Alice Fulton and Pauline Hatch

If you're serious about wanting to control clutter and simplify your life, you'll be interested in two basic ideas from these authors:

The Law of Household Physics: Only so much will fit into one space and still let you retain order and control.

The Law of Household Ecology: When something new comes in, something else must go out.

Okay, You're convinced that simplifying and sorting out your family's belongings really *will* make a big difference in your day-to-day life. But you're not quite sure just what's involved? Determination is a key factor, of course, but there are also eight distinct steps. Here they are.

1. Prepare your family

Tell *all* members of the household what you're planning to do, how you will do it, and why you want to do it. Make sure everyone understands what they can

expect from you while you're digging out from under the overload.

2. Collect containers

This may not be a new concept, but it definitely works. You'll need four big containers per room — large boxes, heavy-duty trash bags, even big brown grocery bags. Label one "someplace else" for any keeper that doesn't belong in the room you're working in. Label another "charity" for usable things that you no longer want anywhere in the house. Label a third "garbage." (It's only fair to be discriminating when you load charity bags — much of the stuff people send to charity really belongs in the garbage). Label the last container "to file."

Don't take time to deal with the "someplace else" containers until you've sorted out the whole house. You'll get sidetracked otherwise. Yes, you'll be accumulating lots of these boxes, and you will wonder where everything will go. But remember, while you're adding up "someplace else" boxes, you

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are also emptying space. The someplace else things will eventually "melt" into empty spaces.

To avoid confusion, tie the charity and garbage bags differently — maybe twist-ties on the garbage and yarn on the charity. This ends the guesswork as to what bag goes where when you finally haul them out. And do yourself a favor: Don't allow anyone to open a closed bag or box. They'll undo every good thing you've accomplished by playing the "I can use this" game.

Now for the small containers. There's no set number. Just collect lots of shoe boxes, plastic refrigerator containers, cottage cheese and margarine tubs, and so on for organizing the insides of drawers and cupboards.

3. Use a clockwise pattern

Work in a clockwise pattern around the perimeter of each room, bringing your four big containers with you. If you are in a bedroom, start at the closet. Deal with each item you come to as you progress around the room, assigning things to the four containers.

Follow a definite pattern as you go from room to room, also. Save the kitchen for last. It's always a big job, and time-consuming. You will be glad to have the experience of the other rooms under your belt before you tackle it.

4. Evaluate and assign

Professionals in any business are always evaluating processes, products, personnel, procedures, inventory, and so on. A professional homemaker

does the same thing. (And a professional homemaker isn't necessarily a full-time one — just one who's very good and very thorough at that job.) Think about where things are used, how often things are used, when you use these things, and why you use these things. Answers to these questions determine appropriate resting places for everything. The shoeshine kit is a good case in point: If it's used often, then it deserves convenient storage space. And if it is used in the kitchen, then it should be stored there, rather than in the bathroom, bedroom, or basement.

Start thinking this way: Assign specific purposes to all spaces in your home and then allow them to fulfill that function and none other.

5. Ask the right questions

This is a key point. For each item in each room, ask yourself these questions:

- Do I like it?
- Do I use it?
- Do I want it?
- Do I need it?
- Do I have room for it?

Even if you answer yes to the first four questions, if you answer no to the last one, you may need to reevaluate. The key to gaining permanent control of your home is to work *with* your space, not against it.

Be ruthlessly realistic when deciding what to toss and what to keep, and think quality over quantity. Do you really use that heating pad with the short in the cord? Do you really want that white straw purse with the cracked bamboo handle? Using all five questions on everything you own will make letting go of things easier, "buy" you space, and help you stop shuffling things around.

6. Group and store like items together

Again, this isn't a new idea,

but it's very important. Doing this will put logic into the placement of things.

The practice of grouping and storing like items together has several advantages. First, you'll have only one place to look for things. Second, finding and putting away becomes easier as you put a stop to the household treasure hunt pattern. Finally, grouping and storing like items together is a great time, energy, and nerve saver. It lets you know what's missing, and what's duplicated.

This rule includes storing seasonal items, such as snowsuits, boots, gloves, together — and out of the way when they're out of season.

Assign specific purposes to all spaces in your home and then allow them to fulfill that function and none other.

7. Use memento boxes

There is a place in our homes and lives for the sentimental. Author and household management expert Daryl Hoole says that place is a treasure or memento box, and each family member should have his or her own. A grocery store cardboard orange or apple box, with lid, makes a good starter box.

A baby book, scrapbook, photo album, ancestral heirlooms, vacation mementoes, a last doll or treasured toy, and baby booties are some contents suggestions. A large manila envelope (one for each child) could hold school report cards and selected school papers.

Obviously this is not something the neighbor children are allowed into. We suggest assigning this box to the child's closet shelf — it'll be available, but just enough out of reach to insure protection.

As a child moves from one stage of development to another, his idea of "treasures" changes. Note that the child's contributions will also share space in this box with your additions — the baby album, first rattle, bronzed baby booties, and so on. So, to prevent this box from expanding to the size of a mini-storage shed, have the child occasionally reevaluate the box's contents, discard some things, and make room for new "treasures."

8. Enjoy the empty space

Don't let empty space make you nervous. It does take some adjusting to, since it's almost always a radical change. But give empty spaces a chance for at least 21 days, and you'll end up loving them even more than filled spaces.

Now that you know what to do, here are a few *don'ts*.

Don't be afraid to throw things away.

Don't feel guilty about throwing things away — or wanting to.

Don't keep anything that's broken and cannot be repaired — or that in your heart of hearts you have no intention of repairing.

Don't be intimidated into keeping things you really don't want to keep.

And remember, this major clearing out is a one-shot experience. You'll never have to dig out like this again, because if you adopt these steps as part of your lifestyle, your home will never be overloaded again. Let these eight steps become your home-making standards, and change your life.

Alice Fulton and Pauline Hatch are full-time homemakers and specialists in the field of home management. This article is an excerpt from their very practical and delightful book *It's Here . . . Somewhere*, published by Writer's Digest Books and available in paperback at most major bookstores (\$6.95).

The baby's room: Make it baby's own

For a baby's room to be a baby's room, the approach is basic: Get everything that isn't baby-related out. As clothes are outgrown, move them out; for safety as well as neatness, don't store older children's toys in the baby's room.

Closet and dresser

Babies need only a few pieces of dress-up clothing, and even these items rarely require closet space. So you can count on closet room to store things such as the playpen, walker, stroller, infant seat, even the diaper pail. Hang as much as you can, rather than stacking these things on top of each other on the floor. The closest shelf can hold one or two extra blankets or quilts, and the baby's memento box, with the baby book in it.

With a baby comes a diaper bag. This is like the family car keys or mother's purse . . . it is easy to misplace if it hasn't been assigned a specific resting place. A suggestion: Hang the bag on a wood hanger in baby's closet, or on a sturdy hook in the end closet wall.

If the closet seems like the best place for diaper storage, a hanging diaper organizer or stacker will help you. If you use disposables, get them out of the bulky box and put them in a diaper organizer.

Be ruthlessly realistic as you streamline baby clothes. Typically, sentimentality and frugality make it difficult to get rid of very much here, but don't give in to these forces. Toss out stained and worn clothes. Put clothing that doesn't currently fit into a labeled box and into the storage area. Special pieces, such as a christening outfit, the cap and booties Grandma crocheted, a first pair of shoes, and so on deserve a place in a child's memento box. Fold play clothes

as a unit, top inside the matching bottom, and place them in a drawer; hang up dressy clothes. But remember: You will buy space and save on laundry time if you keep out only a minimum number of clothes.

Put containers in the dresser drawers for control. If there's space, put undershirts in one container, socks and booties in another container, plastic pants in another, all in one drawer. Put pajamas there, too, if you have room. Play shirts, pants, and rompers could go in another drawer, and sweaters and outer clothing still another.



Other furniture

It's nice to have a rocking chair and changing table in a baby's room if there is space. But if you don't have enough space for the rocker, dresser, changing table, plus the crib, then make some choices. If the dresser is a low one, it can double as a changing table; or the standard-size changing table can serve as a dresser. Another possibility: Put the dresser or chest of drawers inside the closet.

If baby hygiene takes place here, then put related supplies, such as powder, cream, lotion, cotton swabs, cotton balls and so on, in a container (those glorious shoeboxes . . .) inside a drawer for convenience. If there is no drawer space to accommodate

these things, then perhaps they could sit on the closet shelf and be taken down as needed. We suggest you store nothing under the crib; you'll thank us when you're vacuuming.

What about shared rooms?

Babies' rooms are often small, if you're lucky enough to even have this room. So the most important points are: keep it simple and easy to maintain. But how do you do this if baby must share his space with the sewing machine, an office desk, or even other people?

Although the introduction to this chapter advised getting everything that isn't baby-related out, we recognize that in this space-crunched world, baby doesn't always have a private room. If that's the case at your house, divide the room up and make specific assignments to each area. Keep everything in the room in containers and allow only a bare minimum in there. Hang as much as possible.

Roommates manage their space better if Mother removes ownership ambiguity as much as possible — "This is Bill's shelf, this is Brian's shelf; this is Bill's drawer, this is Brian's drawer . . .," and so on. Spaces may need labeling to aid the memory.

Going solo

What about the lucky child whose room is *his* throughout his stay-at-home years? Keep it simplified as the child grows and develops new interests. The furnishings and decor should keep pace with the child's stages of growth and development. So don't store non-used clothes, toys and games, furniture, accessories and so on in this room. Assuming they are still keepers, move them to an appropriate storage area so the child has simplified growth space.

— A.F. and P.H.

Telephone rules for children and parents

By Sandy Stiefer

Every time my friend, Cheryl, gets on the telephone her daughter, Nicole, gets into trouble. She climbs onto the kitchen counters, scattering her mother's papers. She opens the cupboards and spills the sugar bowl. She empties a box of cereal all over the counter and floor, then jumps down and turns the television or stereo volume up loud. Our conversation is constantly interrupted as Cheryl yells at her daughter not to jump, to get down, or to leave the TV alone.

When I talk to my friend, Mary, she interrupts our conversation to talk to her three-year-old son, Marc, who has asked a question or suddenly has some "urgent" need.

Nicole and Marc, as well as their mothers, need to learn some telephone rules. Most children have at least some rules to follow during the course of the day — but when Mother gets on the telephone, they misbehave because there are no specific rules for that time.

Does this sound familiar? There are several ways to keep this misbehavior from occurring. First, retrain yourself.

- Like Mary, do you interrupt your telephone conversation to find out what your child wants? Like Cheryl, do you yell at your child as he misbehaves? In doing so, you tell your child that it's okay to be rude when you're on the telephone, and that conversation can be interrupted. Establish a new rule: unless your child has obviously hurt himself, ignore him until you are done on the telephone.

- When it's impossible to ignore screams or other actions, excuse yourself and physically put your child in his room with a brief explanation that when you are finished with your telephone conversation, he may rejoin you.

- Announce ahead of time that you are going to use the telephone and explain what behavior is expected of your child. Tell her what she may not do — "You may not climb on counters, touch the stereo or TV, or yank on the telephone cord." Then be sure to tell her what she *may* do — "You may look at a book, color a picture, do a puzzle, or play quietly in your room."

Most children have at least some rules to follow during the course of the day — but when Mother gets on the telephone, they misbehave because there are no specific rules for that time.

Make it clear that your child is to leave you alone until you are finished and that you will then be happy to listen to her needs.

- Back up those rules with consequences to be faced. Children have to test rules — it's part

of their growth process. When you make the announcement that you are going to use the telephone, also mention the consequences if the telephone rules are broken.

An effective consequence is the loss of privileges. Television viewing is a privilege, so is playing with a friend, or having a special snack. Whatever the privilege, it has to be something that has meaning to your child, so that taking it away for misbehavior shows you mean what you say.

- For toddlers it helps to have a special toy or play item that is used only when you are on the telephone. Take it out when you announce your plans to use the telephone, and put it away when you are finished.

- Always praise good behavior.

Having these rules gives your child an understanding of what behavior is and is not acceptable when you're on the telephone. Follow these rules consistently and misbehavior will eventually stop being a problem.

Sandy Stiefer is a mother and technical writer for the Ruben Salazar Library of Sonoma State University in northern California.

The American Baby TV Show

| | On CBN Cable Network | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Mondays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| On SPN Cable Network | | |
| Tuesdays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Wednesdays | 8 PM ET | 5 PM PT |
| Thursdays | 2 PM ET | 11 AM PT |
| Fridays | 4:30 PM ET | 1:30 PM PT |

A Journey Through the First Year of Life

| | |
|---------|--|
| June 22 | On CBN Cable Network 8PM Eastern Time |
| June 22 | On SPN Cable Network 11PM Eastern Time Check local listings for channel. |

Preschool playgroups

By Julie Corken Zimmer

Participating in playgroups with each of my children has been one of the best parts of early parenting. My daughter's playgroup provided a network that eased my transition into parenting. It was an informal, joyous way for me to participate in her first social experiences.

Playgroup gives my son security in a larger world and exposes him to a variety of family lifestyles and new ideas. Playgroup has allowed him to step out of his older sister's shadow. The weekly experience has added new dimensions to their lives and mine.

In his book, *Children's Friendships*, social psychologist Zick Rubin recognized the value of regular play with agemates. He wrote:

A favorable family situation helps us to feel secure, but experiences with our own age group help to develop an awareness of ourselves and of social reality which family experiences alone cannot give . . . even in early childhood, children already have a strong need for a sense of group belonging which can be fulfilled only by friendships with their peers . . . Unlike learning to play tennis, when one can usually do best by practicing with a more skilled and experienced player, when it comes to learning to interact with others the best method seems to be to practice with those who are as inexperienced as oneself. By practicing with peers who share one's own lack of social skill, toddlers are best able to learn to coordinate behaviors and

to pull their own weight in social interaction.

What is a playgroup?

A playgroup consists of several preschool age children meeting regularly at each other's homes to play. Membership is small and constant. Four is a manageable number and six is an absolute maximum. The children are close in age, with ideally no more than a few months difference between the youngest and oldest. Each child's parent or parents participate, also.

Beyond these basic requirements, playgroups vary greatly. Each can be designed to meet the needs of the individual children and families involved.

When to begin

You may be ready to join a playgroup even before your baby is able to play. One new mother used newspaper birth announcements to find other children born in the same month as her own infant. She wrote letters to these families, inviting the mothers to join a group with their babies. Several responded, mostly first-time mothers. They met weekly, sharing their questions and ideas. When the babies became toddlers, they made an easy transition to being "left" in the care of each mother on a rotating basis.

By 12 or 14 months, most children are ready for new social experiences with agemates. Don't expect cooperative play; that is a year or two beyond your child's grasp. For now your youngster will be content to explore new faces and places. She is gaining social skills through parallel play and developing trust in the other adults whose homes she visits.

Though independence is your goal, there is no rush to leave your child at another home for play sessions. You may decide to stay for the first session at each new home, or even for a number of months.

As the mother of a former clinging vine, I know it is difficult not to compare your shy child to more outgoing toddlers. You can take the pressure off your youngster if you become oblivious to real or imagined comparisons and give her time to adjust. Curiosity and familiarity will pull your child off your lap and into the action.



Be ready to let her go, then wait with just a little encouragement when she returns to seek reassurance. Soon your child will learn to depend on another playgroup parent in your absence, knowing that you will be there when it is time to go home.

It is never too late to begin a playgroup with your preschooler. A child who has a very limited experience with children close in age often has difficulty adjusting to kindergarten. It may be especially important to create social opportunities for your child if she does not have regular playmates or attend a preschool or day care by age four.

Getting started

If you have no acquaintances with children close in age to your own, use your social networks to find some. Ask friends about the people they know who have children. Introduce yourself to parents at library story hour, or in your church or synagogue. Try to identify parents who share your interests and have the same goals for the group. Enthusiastic parents will provide an enriching playgroup experience.

If you can arrange to meet the parents without their toddlers, take some uninterrupted time to discuss goals, plan schedules and share information about your children and families.

As a group, you can decide how much structure your children need and how long and often to meet. You might all follow a specific schedule or each parent may plan the morning as he or she likes.

An hour or two of play weekly will be the limit for very young children. Older children may easily enjoy a half day including lunch. Three- or four-year-olds who are not attending preschool may be eager to meet more frequently than toddlers. For two-career families, work schedules will dictate more limited playgroup schedules.

Planning ahead

Playgroup sessions require advance organization by the parent in charge. You might need to temporarily rearrange furniture or toys for free play.

By age three or four the host child may want to help plan, also. She can choose and help prepare a simple snack ahead of time, or suggest a favorite book or record. Anticipation of "her turn" will strengthen her interest in her new friends.

Specific activities should be geared to the age of children. Very young children need free play with little or no structure.



Older preschoolers enjoy a balance between free play and organized activities, and between active and quiet play.

Remember that you are an informal playgroup, not a preschool. Your children will have endless opportunities to color identical squirrel pictures in school. Their earliest years at home are best spent enjoying and exploring materials. If they are interested in cutting, let them use scissors and paper. If they like glue, put out a box of junk and four bottles of Elmer's. Avoid the temptation to prescribe a finished product that "looks like something."

Capitalize on the unique things your family setting has to offer. A farm child may enjoy following the mail carrier around your block in town. Conversely, another child might be awed by a chicken busily scratching in the barn yard. If you play the guitar, love to bake, or know where wild flowers grow in the woods, share your interests and talents. Pets, grandparents, and neighbors may also have something to offer.

One mother took her charges to the family business office where they took pictures of their hands on the photocopy ma-

chine and listened to their voices on a dictaphone. On a walk through the courthouse, another group was captivated by an elevator ride. You can find additional activity ideas in *The Playgroup Handbook* by Laura Peabody and Nancy Towner Butterworth, and *The Playgroup Book* by Mary Winn and Mary Ann Porcher.

Enjoy the benefits

Over time, the same child who may have watched your departure with a quivering lip will look forward eagerly to her special mornings with friends. Besides the good things playgroup does for your youngster, it can benefit you.

Sharing ideas and information with other parents can make your job as a parent easier. In a mobile society without extended family nearby, a playgroup serves as a supportive network.

Though it is not primarily a babysitting arrangement, playgroup provides free time when your child is in another home. Participants find it easy to trade babysitting at other times in the week, secure in the knowledge that their child is comfortable and safe with friends.

Other than the small amount

of money you might spend on materials, playgroup is free. If your finances prohibit preschool, this is an alternative social experience for your youngster.

Finally, you will reap the rewards of participating in the unfolding of several preschool personalities. Sharing in this facet of your child's development will strengthen your parenting skills and enrich your relationship. You will be rewarded with the trust and friendship of some delightful little people, and the memories will last a lifetime.

Resources:

Broad, Laura Peabody and Nancy Towner Butterworth. *The Playgroup Handbook*. St. Martin's Press, 1974.*

Rubin, Zick. *Children's Friendships*. Harvard University Press, 1980.

Winn, Mary and Mary Ann Porcher. *The Playgroup Book*. MacMillan Co., 1967.*

*Out of print. Check with your local library for a copy.

Julie Corken Zimmer and research assistants Emily (age 7) and Brian (age 4) are veterans of several playgroups. Julie is a freelance writer with a background in psychology, education and counseling.

Learn to expect the unexpected when supervising groups of children

Adults who supervise groups of toddlers must learn to expect the unexpected. Safety requires careful planning, organized management, and an eagle eye.

- Besides a first aid kit and a list of emergency telephone numbers, you may want to have a signed medical release form for each child authorizing emergency care. When planning an outing, invite other mothers to accompany the group.

- Be prepared for your child to be at her worst when playgroup is at your house. Sharing both her home territory and her parent is a big challenge. You might help her put away special toys which would be particularly hard to share.

- You can encourage two-year-olds to be generous, but demanding generosity is fruitless and frustrating. Rather than forcing a child to give up a toy, suggest that the waiting child ask to use it "when Joey is finished." Suggest substitutes, bringing out a special "sharing toy" to end a quarrel. Begin a new game or activity, read a book, play a record.

When planning include as many joint activities with duplicate equipment as possible. An empty margarine tub for each child in the sand pile will lessen friction. For an outdoor day, each child might bring her own riding toy to use or share.

- Remember that children learn as much from their squabbles as from their warmer moments. Allow opportunities for the youngsters to settle their own disputes. If all else fails, a "time out" spot in some quiet space may be necessary. Three minutes alone at a designated spot gives an angry child time to unwind.

- Give yourself opportunities to talk with the other playgroup parents. Discuss views on sharing and taking turns. Talk about problems but also let each other know about the many positive behaviors you have noticed in the children.

— J.C.Z.

Watch for: "A Journey Through the First Year of Life"

A baby's life is one milestone after another: from the first smile to the first step, many dramatic changes and achievements will occur.

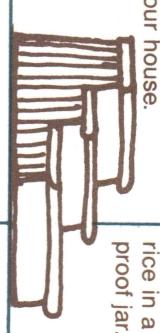
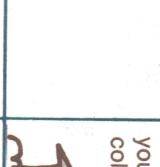
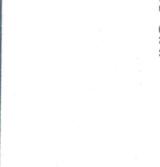
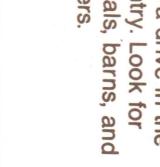
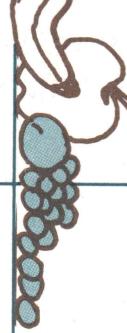
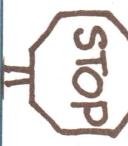
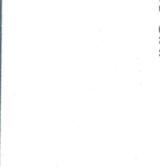
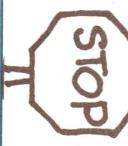
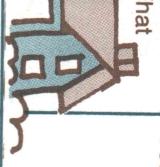
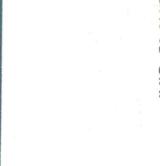
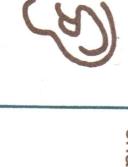
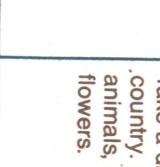
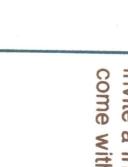
A new prime-time television special, "A Journey Through the First Year of Life," guides parents through these changes by highlighting the major steps in infant development, from the helpless newborn to the active one-year-old.

The program will air Sunday, June 22 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time on CBN Cable Network and at 11:00 p.m. Eastern time on SPN, the Satellite Program Network.

The show is co-hosted by Judith Nolte, editor of *American Baby Magazine*, and Dr. Burton L. White, an educational psychologist and author of *The First Three Years of Life*. Dr. White is also Director of the Center for Parent Education in Newton, Massachusetts.

Using dramatic footage of babies in action, the two hosts interpret the meaning of each stage of development and explain how parents can enhance their infants' growth patterns.

Fun things to do in June

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| 1 Ride your wagon/ trike/bicycle outside.  | 2 Count <i>all</i> the stairs in your house.  | 3 Make a rattle: Put rice in a safe, child- proof jar.  | 4 Play music and clap hands.  | 5 Draw a picture of your house. What color is it?  | 6 Count to six.  | 7 Take a drive in the country. Look for animals, barns, and flowers.  |
| 8 Eat fresh fruit.  | 9 Massage Youngster's legs.  | 10 Make a Father's Day card to send to Grandpa.  | 11 Go to an ice cream shoppe and try a new flavor.  | 12 Plan a trip to the zoo.  | 13 Play hide-and-seek with the whole family.  | 14 Flag Day. Say the Pledge of Allegiance.  |
| 15 Father's Day! Take Dad out to eat. (Surprise him with a cake!)  | 16 What is the weather like today?  | 17 What does this sign mean?  | 18 Read a book after supper.  | 19 Where are your ears?  | 20 Donate old toys to a charity.  | 21 Go to the park— invite a friend to come with you.  |
| 22 Walk barefoot outside.  | 23 Have Youngster deposit \$1.00 in his savings account.  | 24 Look at a thermometer. What is the temperature?  | 25 Be a vegetarian for a day.  | 26 Go to a neighborhood softball game.  | 27 Clean out the closet and give Youngster old clothes to play in.  | 28 Eat breakfast outside.  |
| 29 Sit outside in the wading pool. Play with a toy boat.  | 30 Look for birds' nests in the trees.  | | | | | |

Growing Child
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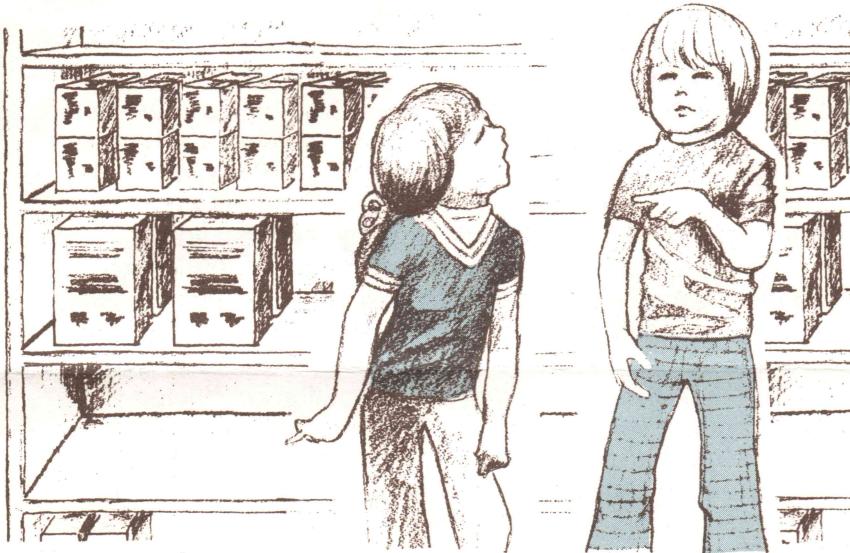
For children 6 months to 6 years

Growing Parent®

June 1986
Vol. 14 No. 6

How to play 'Store Wars' and win

Every parent who goes supermarket shopping with children knows how 'Store Wars' is played. But, too often, both parent and child come out losers. Here's how to play and win.



By Diane Bogosian

Parents who go supermarket shopping with children know how Store Wars is played: War is declared as soon as the electronic doors swing open. Rous-

ing battle cries of "Pop!" "Candy!" "Chips!" help you pinpoint your child's location, and soon you are hit with a volley of rapid-fire begging. Saying "No!" only increases the hostilities.

Your initial advantage (you're bigger than they are) seems to dwindle as aggressive attacks in the cookie section leave you spinning. Strategic surrenders win you small battles but soon your child is on the warpath once more, insisting on this new cereal or that new cheese snack. Standing shellshocked in the checkout lane you don't realize the shopping cart has been sabotaged with cupcakes, orange drink and notebooks until pushed to the point of no return by the cashier.

In this issue

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It's not an easy war to win. The enemy is not the children themselves but the advertising that recruits and mobilizes them. The influences that turn usually well-behaved children into foot soldiers of fancy are as devious as double agents. But with foresight, patience, and a clever battle plan, these insidious influences can be defeated.

With an offense of creativity and a defense of consistency, you can make smart consumers of your children and secure your budget line. Here is some ammunition to get you started:

- **Write a list and stick with it.** This is the best, and least followed, advice. The supermarket is full of traps waiting for the unprepared shopper.

Share list-making responsibilities with older children and, once in the store, present the list as a scavenger hunt. Award points for each listed item found, deduct points for items brought to the cart that are not on the list. Offer an appropriate reward. This game alleviates boredom and makes "unlisted" items less attractive.

- **Depending upon the age of the child, you can turn a frustrating experience into a learning one.** Is a 32-ounce jar at \$1.29 really more expensive than a 16-ounce jar at 89 cents?

Sugar is the second ingredient in this brand, fifth in this brand. Which has more sugar?

When a child picks up the best bargain, or the more nutritional product, reward him with the money saved, or a special trip to the bookstore, or other special treat.

- **Do not use food to reward or punish your children.** Such emphasis not only exaggerates the child's desire to possess certain products, but encourages bad eating habits. Find other ways of rewarding behavior and use food only to fulfill the nutritional needs of your family.



U.S. parents as a group spend close to \$4 billion a year *in addition* to their grocery bills by giving in to their children's request for specific products or brands.

• **Stick to your guns.** A New York psychologist once confessed to her radio audience that she had left a cartful of food sitting in the supermarket aisle. She had told her three-year-old son that she would take him home if he didn't stop crying for candy and junk food. He didn't and she did. Although we may feel sympathy for the stock clerk who had to return the abandoned merchandise, the woman's immediate action convinced the child that she meant what she said, and he modified his behavior accordingly.

• **Reclaim your child's mind from the powerful pull of television.** Commercials exploit a child's desire for instant gratification just when the child is struggling to control such urges. On

How advertising sucks kids in

In a study entitled "Consumer Dynamics in the Supermarket," store managers are given the following advice concerning children:

They can badger the life out of you, those kids — upset displays, wreak havoc on price tags and drop the peanut butter square in the middle of the aisle, but it's a small price to pay, for kids are the key to the young marrieds.

Children accompanying their mother, the study goes on to say, are on an adventure into the adult world where "not infrequently they can instigate purchases which might not have been made if they hadn't come along — extra candy, a toy, a new cereal."

Instigate, indeed! One study reports that U.S. parents as a group spend close to \$4 billion a year *in addition* to their grocery bills by giving in to their children's request for specific products or brands. An article in *Advertising Age* says, "If you truly want big sales, you will use the child as your assistant salesman. He sells, he nags, until he breaks down the sales resistance of his mother and father."

It's a rare parent who is not faced with the daily duty of refusing a child a want created through advertising. One study found that after watching commercials, 90% of the children tested felt like asking their parents to buy the advertised product. When parents refuse to buy, common reactions are crying, kicking, screaming, and throwing things in anger. In fact, a preliminary investigation conducted in 1978 by the Federal Trade Commission confirmed what parents have known all along: TV commercials undermine the parent-child relationship by causing conflicts over food, generate resentment against parents who deny their children advertised products, and manipulate children into becoming little sales agents for the advertisers.

Supermarkets often pick up where commercials leave off. Products that appeal to children are placed on lower shelves where they can easily catch the child's eye: Prevelant supermarket theory says that if the child can reach the product, and get it in the cart, chances are good that the parent will buy it.

Cardboard displays featuring favorite cartoon or movie characters are used to draw children to products, and aggressive product placement — candy in the produce department, candy at the checkout lanes — makes it even harder for parents to refuse their children's constant demands.

—D.B.

the day you plan to go shopping, curtail the child's television viewing. Studies show that children want what they have most recently seen on TV. One mother trained her three-year-old to turn

down the TV set whenever a commercial came on. The child soon learned to identify commercials on her own, and turned down the set automatically. The near absence of this child's

demand for specific products at the supermarket is a testimonial to the power of television — and the power of the parent who decides to control it.

• **Don't be embarrassed to ask that purchases rung up at the register be taken back — and taken off the register receipt.** If, by chance, something has escaped your notice and you don't discover it until you get home, put it aside and save the receipt. Have the child, escorted by you, return it in person. This is a positive way of teaching the child such behavior won't be tolerated.

• **Bring wholesome snacks or small toys from home** and give them to the child while in the checkout lane. High profit items like candy and magazines are intentionally placed there to lure bored parents and children. Inform your children ahead of time that they're not to choose from the candy racks. Set a good example by not browsing through the magazines. Spend the time chatting with your child instead.

• **Play along.** Since young children often believe that colorful folks such as Tony the Tiger, Sugar Bear, and Snap, Crackle and Pop really do visit kids like them, they're bound to want them over for breakfast. To combat such advertising, play along to some extent. Your child really wants the box more than the cereal, since the box is a symbol of the character that your child adores. Fill the box with granola or some other dry cereal you feel is acceptable and "sweeten" the pot from time to time with a toy surprise in the box. Don't try to deceive your child by pretending the box contains the cereal advertised — instead, explain that the child's special box can be filled with all sorts of neat cereals.

• **Leave the kids at home?** Seventy-five percent of all moth-

ers take their children to the supermarket with them, so suggesting that you leave your child at home may be in vain.

Organizing an informal babysitting co-op among other harried parents, however, just might work for you. Doing a neighbor's shopping in exchange for babysitting services, or alternating such responsibilities is another possibility.

If you must take your child with you, tell the child *in advance* where and how often you are prepared to say "no." Do not leave it to the whim of the moment. Be consistent and firm. Let the child know there are occasional and specific times he can have his way.



By understanding how advertising and in-store tactics influence your child, you can arm yourself with the most powerful weapon available: knowledge. Get to know your supermarket, and concentrate on the real shopping needs of your family. Remember that you're not only fighting a ravaged grocery budget, but the long-range effects that poor buying habits will have on your children as the consumers of tomorrow. With cunning, and with confidence, you can play Store Wars and win.

Diane Bogosian writes freelance nonfiction and advertising copy. She is also the mother of a three-year-old boy.

How I learned to love reading

"My mother always read aloud to me, oh, from probably before I was born. And that's why I've always said that if I do well on radio, it was from hearing her voice. She's a wonderful interpretive reader — very expressive. She sat for *hours* reading aloud to me before I could read for myself, and that put the sound of good reading in my ear and got me to see what reading could do for you and the worlds it could take you to. She would read to me — this tells you how long ago it was — all of those Five Little Pepper books. *Little Women* I must have read 100 times — I always wanted to be Jo March. The Nancy Drew books I liked, and *Cherry Ames, Student Nurse*, that sort of popular fiction. I wanted to be a nurse for years because of *Cherry Ames* and the neat uniforms she wore. All my reading now (because of my job) has to be today's reading, what's new in the world of publishing and the world of novels.

"I have a friend who says he never reads the living. I say I only read the living now, and I envy him so much. I never get a chance to dip back, although at the moment, I'm reading *Isak Dinesen*, whom I've never read before, in preparation for a trip to Kenya. But it's always that kind of work-related reading. I think the older things really are much, much more enriching.

Susan Stamberg, co-host of *All Things Considered* on National Public Radio and author of *Every Night at Five*

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You and your baby's physician

You and your doctor each play an important role in your child's health care. Establishing a partnership that works is essential.

By Joan Wester Anderson

According to a recent poll conducted by the American Board of Family Practice, 82% of patients believe they should ask more questions of their doctor (93% of the physicians agree). In actual practice, however, we're all apt to be tongue-tied. Few of us know what to ask or how, and busy doctors seem to discourage casual office conversation.

The situation becomes even more awkward when dealing with the baby's doctor, especially if you're an inexperienced, first-time parent.

What is an emergency, and what can wait until morning?

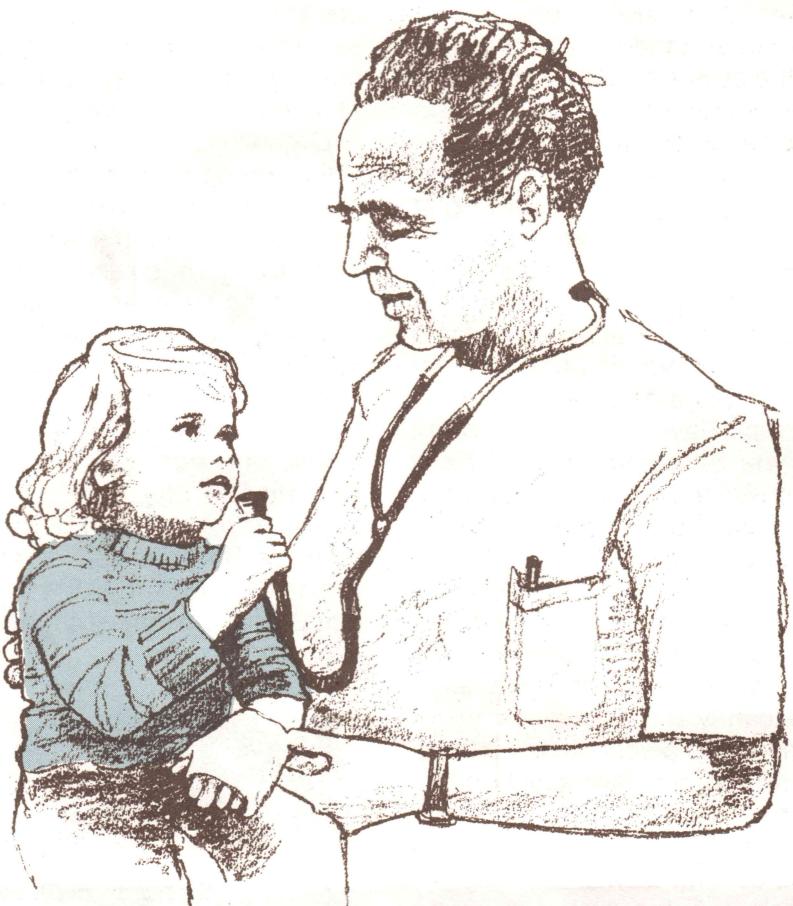
Should you ask lots of questions during office visits, or should you try not to be a "bother?"

And what if you don't like your physician's attitude — should you suffer in silence, change doctors or tell him how you feel?

Good teamwork is essential when caring for a baby, and you and your physician each have an important role to play. How can you establish a partnership with your pediatrician, and learn to work well with him?

Your role.

Communication is a two-way street, so be sure you are doing your part.



What if you don't like your physician's attitude — should you suffer in silence, change doctors or tell him how you feel?

• **Learn the system.** When phoning your physician, for example, find out what hours are best to call. Some doctors have regular calling hours for non-emergencies, while others tell patients to leave a message anytime and they will return the call when they can.

Routine calls during the early months usually involve rashes, crying, colds, feeding and sleeping problems, and even hiccups. These are perfectly normal reasons for calling, and your doctor should be willing to address them. If you feel the situation is an emergency, you should contact the physician immediately, whatever the hour. (A good baby care book can help you tell the difference between "routine"

and "emergency.")

Just as important, you should keep your telephone line open when expecting your doctor's call. "I tend to be a bit abrupt," one pediatrician admits, "when I've dialed the patient's number several times, and keep getting a busy signal."

• **Be prepared.** Before you phone your physician, write down everything you wish to discuss. (Some parents like to keep a log with questions, instructions and observations noted and dated. This provides a handy record of Baby's health and can also be used to jot down routine questions to discuss at office visits.) When you call, state your name and telephone number, in case you are cut off, then state

the problem. Write down whatever directions the doctor gives you, and if he recommends an unfamiliar product, ask him to spell it. Then read back his directions so he can catch any errors or misunderstandings.

- **Do what the doctor says.**

While it's obvious that you should follow your doctor's instructions, surprisingly, some parents don't. "Patients decide that the medication is too expensive, the suggestions too complicated . . . then they call back to say that the condition is still present," one doctor says. "Under these circumstances, it's difficult to evaluate the situation."

Physicians are not infallible, and sometimes their advice will not work. You should report this but only after giving it a fair trial.

- **Ask and it shall be given.**

While telephone conversations should be kept concise and brief, office visits provide more time to talk, as long as *you* take the initiative. Physicians cannot answer questions you don't ask, nor are they inclined to spend a lot of time discussing general health matters. Instead, bring your log with your specific questions and concerns and put this time to good use.

- **Every visit won't be perfect.** Try to schedule your visit at a time when your baby is not starving, but remain calm if he screams or wets. Pediatricians are used to all of this, and are perfectly willing to talk above the din, provided you have things to say. And don't worry about being a "bother." You may be new at the parenting game, but the more informed you are, the better health care you can give. And that's a good investment for everyone.

Your doctor's role.

As the other half of the team, your physician's primary role is to provide good well-baby care, and to properly treat your child



when he is ill. A trusting parent/physician relationship, however, goes beyond these basics. You also have a right to expect:

- **An open manner.** Does your doctor seem willing to discuss things that concern you? Is she encouraging? Is she playful and gentle with your child? Or is her *usual* attitude one of hurried briskness?

Busy physicians should be forgiven for an occasional lapse or personality quirk (my first pediatrician seemed impersonal on the phone, but was patient personified in the office), but constant grumpiness can undermine communication.

An open manner is also displayed when a physician occasionally admits that she doesn't know all the answers. Because children are individuals, not every remedy will work for each child in precisely the same way. The doctor who tells you that she isn't sure why that sore throat returned, or recommends a specialist or a second opinion is putting her patients' welfare ahead of her ego—and is probably a gem.

- **An efficiently-run office.** Does your physician receive and return your phone messages? Are waiting rooms and offices

clean and attractive, bills correct and sent on time? Are appointment times *reasonably* reliable?

Pediatricians sometimes get behind on scheduling due to an unexpected influx of ill children (and when *your* child is ill, you'll want the same "bring him right in" treatment), but if appointments and calls are always delayed, it may signal a too-large practice. Most physicians close their practices when the patient load reaches a certain total, but a few don't—sometimes resulting in harried, overworked doctors and dissatisfied clientele.

- **A comfortable feeling.** If you don't feel relaxed with your baby's physician, the relationship won't work, despite her qualifications. Building an easy and trusting alliance does take time, so allow some. If you are still dissatisfied in any way, do tell your doctor about it. Chances are, she'll be willing to discuss the problem with you, and see what can be done.

- **Change may be best.** On the other hand, you may come to realize that the situation isn't going to change, or that you simply want a physician with a different personality, office set-up or location. If so, check for recommendations with friends who are satisfied with their health care, and make a change. And don't feel guilty about it. "I wouldn't stay with a doctor I didn't like—for whatever reason," says a pediatrician. "Sometimes it's just a matter of chemistry, but that can be very important."

Thanks to advances in medical science, our babies enjoy excellent health care. And building a satisfying parent/physician partnership can make a good thing even better.

Joan Wester Anderson is a wife, mother of five and freelance author of books, articles and short stories, many of them dealing with family topics.

The Back Page

Toy safety questions and answers from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Where can consumers purchase toy chest lid supports that will address the strangulation hazard associated with toy chests that have free-falling hinge lids?

Although several firms make non-adjustable spring-loaded lid support devices, Commission test results show that support devices of two firms modify toy chests so that they will comply with the voluntary standard which addresses the strangulation hazard. These firms are:

Carlson Capitol Manufacturing Company
P.O. Box 6165
Rockford, Illinois 61125
(815) 398-3110

Counter Balance Support Company
4788 Colt Road
Rockford, Illinois 61125

Consumers must include the dimensions and weight of the toy chest lids in their orders. Individual lid supports cost \$6.50.

How do parents know if their child's pacifier has DEHP?

DEHP is a chemical that has been used in polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic products, including vinyl pacifiers, plastic baby pants, toys and the vinyl covered bumper pads used in cribs. DEHP may present a potential carcinogenic risk to humans.

Consumers should call the products' manufacturer to find out if it contains DEHP since the Consumer Product Safety Commission has not tested individual products for the presence of this chemical. To obtain the telephone number of a specific manufacturer, the consumer can call: 800-638-CPSC.

The Commission advises that most manufacturers have discontinued use of DEHP and the rest have voluntarily agreed to do so immediately, according to the Toy Manufacturers of America.

Footsteps

Being a parent is not an easy task. It takes patience, perseverance and a whole lot of love. Yet, the task of parenting yields endless rewards and unparalleled satisfaction.

If you are a parent, or about to become one, the U.S. Department of Education has a useful booklet for you. *Footsteps: A Parenting Guide* has 64 pages of practical advice for parents of young children on sibling rivalry, teaching values, independence, creativity, and more. Each chapter gives an overview, specific examples, suggestions, and a bibliography. For your copy of *Footsteps: A Parenting Guide*, send \$2.50 to the Consumer Information Center, Dept. 190N, Pueblo, Colorado 81009.

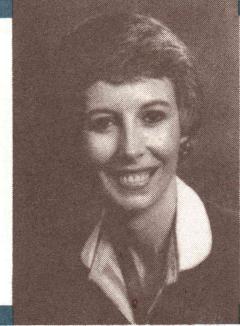
The American Baby TV Show

| | On CBN Cable Network | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Mondays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| On SPN Cable Network | | |
| Tuesdays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Wednesdays | 8 PM ET | 5 PM PT |
| Thursdays | 2 PM ET | 11 AM PT |
| Fridays | 4:30 PM ET | 1:30 PM PT |

A Journey Through the First Year of Life

| | On CBN Cable Network |
|---------|--|
| June 22 | 8PM Eastern Time |
| June 22 | On SPN Cable Network 11PM Eastern Time Check local listings for channel. |

From the Editor



Nancy
Kleckner

Experience: The vital ingredient

Looking for your first job can be a real bummer, as the saying goes. We're all familiar with the Catch-22 of trying to get a job that requires experience when no one will hire you so you can get that experience.

And yet we have all traveled the road from "no experience" to "lots of experience" as we grew from small babies with no teeth, no language or locomotion, to adults with all of the above.

Now that we know so much about life, what have we learned that can be beneficial to our children?

Learn best by doing

Right away we know the things we don't want them to learn the hard way through accidents, misfortune or just being in the wrong place at the wrong time. But we do want them to learn how to:

- Get along with other people.
- Tackle and complete a difficult task.
- Bounce back from failure and "try, try, again."

In *Growing Child* we stress opportunities for experience. Children learn from *doing* and we believe it's important to provide the opportunities for learning to take place.

Too much vs. too little

But here's another Catch-22: If you allow your child to haphazardly try everything and anything that comes along with no precautions or interventions, the child may become a daredevil, a seeker of thrills who runs rampant through every house he enters.

On the other hand, if you do not permit investigation and hands-on experience, you may end up with a timid, fearful child who will try nothing new unless you hold his hand.

Where's the middle ground?

The child is the key

First, realize that every situation is different. There are inherent dangers and rewards in each one and each experience has to be weighed on its own merits. (Safety, of course, is one requirement that should not be compromised.)

Second, and more important, what are your child's capabilities? What kinds of "things" is your child interested in right now? What is he or she physically, emotionally and intellectually capable of doing?

An outing to a baseball game is of little interest to a toddler who is just trying to master sitting still for a definite period of time. But for a budding Little Leaguer, it can be an exciting afternoon.

Look for the positives

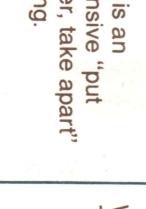
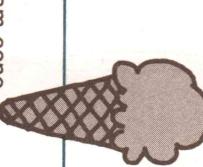
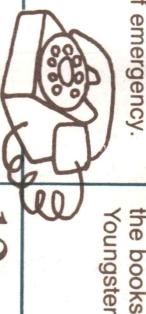
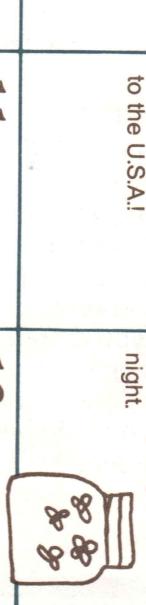
Finally, keep foremost in your mind that your youngster is unique. There are no others exactly like this child — not your sister's youngster, not the boy next door. Comparing your child with other children is a no-win situation.

One caution: If you provide your child with experiences which you want to "be sure" he or she has, but which are inappropriate for the child's age, level of maturity, ability or interests, you're setting yourself up for disappointment — and your child for a potentially bad experience.

Experiences with the world and the things in it are important, all the way from the infant who is allowed to chew contentedly on his father's collar to the two-year-old who discovers the wonders of the garden hose. By keeping your eyes and ears open, you can allow for and provide the most wonderful kinds of experiences a child can ever imagine.

Nancy Kleckner

Fun things to do in July

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 Canada Day. (If you live in the U.S., wave to our neighbors up north.) | 2 Teach Youngster how to dial 911 in case of emergency. | 3 Keep a list (to save for later years) of all the books read to Youngster. | 4 Independence Day! Sing Happy Birthday to the U.S.A.! | 5 Catch fireflies (lightning bugs) at night. | | |
| 6 Beatrix Potter's Birthday. Read <i>The Tale of Benjamin Bunny.</i> | 7 What letters are in the word July? | 8 Give each other "Eskimo kisses." | 9 Velcro is an inexpensive "put together, take apart" plaything. | 10 Who fixed dinner? Tell them thank you! | 11 If you're a little sad...sing a song! | |
| 13 Look for butterflies. | 14 What words rhyme with sky? | 15 How old are you today? In years, months, days? | 16 Eat something green. | 17 Show Youngster how you wash your hands. | 18 Play with a push toy. | 19 Does Youngster have sunglasses? His/her eyes can hurt, too. |
| 20 Anniversary of the first moon walk. Go outside and look at the moon. | 21 Drop clothespins into a safe empty milk carton. | 22 Have you had a knee ride recently? | 23 Ice cream cone invented. Celebrate with your favorite flavor. | 24 Practice smiling in the mirror. | 25 Parents night out. (Youngster stays with a friend!) | 26 Play in the sandbox. What will you make? |
| 27 Look for rocks—big, small, rough, smooth. | 28 Where are your ankles? | |  |  |  |  |
| 29 Draw circles. Color them red. | 30 Exercise fingers—open hands big and wide and then make fists—repeat. | 31 Take a make-believe ride on a magic carpet. | | | | For children 6 months to 6 years |

Getting ready to learn to swim

By Lynne Gensor

After nearly 20 years of teaching hundreds of youngsters to swim, I'm convinced that children can benefit from "swimming readiness." Parents can easily provide this training, even if they don't know how to swim themselves.

The key to helping your child become comfortable in the water is exposing him to the sensations of it and then talking to him about his experience. And these activities really require nothing more elaborate than a bathtub and ordinary safety precautions!

Teaching by example

We demonstrate and explain many activities for our children, from walking to reading to riding a bike. We give them the means of communicating an experience by talking about it ourselves. We show them how to do something when they watch us or when they see other people doing it. Much of it isn't even consciously done

—our children see other kids riding their bikes in the neighborhood, and they subconsciously learn about these activities, becoming ready to learn themselves.

Snuggled on the sofa with your youngster, the two of you share the experience of reading a story. You may not consciously realize it, but you are involved in "reading readiness." You are getting your child ready to learn to read, just as surely as if you worked on phonics from a workbook. You are showing him how people read.

With such simple words as "Let's turn to the first page in the book . . ." you are giving him the vocabulary to be able to talk about the experience of reading. Swimming readiness is just as easy.

Besides preparing your child to be ready to learn to swim at some future point, the combination of feeling the water and talk-



ing about it increases his safety, too. We teach a little one about traffic not by terrifying him but by explaining how to be safe and supervising him while he practices. It is the same with learning to like the water.

A different approach

Unfortunately, learning to swim is often approached in a very different way. Parents tell a child for years, "Don't go near the water or you'll drown!" Then they are surprised when their child balks at taking instruction from a soaking wet stranger who now tells the child to trust him that he won't drown!

There are lots of ways parents can help their youngsters be ready to benefit from swimming instruction, whatever the present age of the child. You can start by exposing your little one to some very basic activities that familiarize him with the sensations of water and then talking about those experiences. This gives him the vocabulary to connect these sensations to other experiences.

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Talk about experiences

It's important for children to hear about their world and it's easy to include explanations of what's happening around us as we talk to them. Even though they may be too young to comprehend our words, they can understand our tone of voice, our feelings about something.

Your child doesn't need to comprehend your words about the water gliding over him in the tub in order to understand from your voice that this experience is okay, that it's fun. Explaining that the toy floats on the water in the bathtub not only gives him an understanding of what he's seeing, but it also provides a basis for explaining how people float, too.

All about water

What can you say about water?

There's everything from the very basic, "It feels warm," to "Feel how your hand has to push against the water to go flat to the bottom."

There's much to say about things in the water, too.

Commenting on leaves floating in a stream is a great introduction to flotation. The fact that the leaves lie *flat* rather than stay upright is probably so ordinary that we've never consciously remarked on it. However, that is exactly what happens when people float—they need to lie prone, flattened out, rather than attempt to stay in a more upright position.

You can show your child that same principle in the bathtub. You have dozens of items readily available that will float.

Toss a cup into the water and talk about how it goes under momentarily and then resurfaces, lying flat. The same thing is true for people. Unless a person is spread-eagled as he hits the water he will disappear under the surface and then come back up.

First things first

Like so many other things, the first step in learning a skill is the hardest one. In order to be comfortable in the water a person must be able to get his face wet.

The problem with getting water on your face is that if you don't know what to do, it can sting your nose and throat. If you do know how to handle it, it's fine. So how do you teach children to "handle" water in their eyes?

I tell kids that we all come equipped with "magic windshield wipers" for our faces—our eyelids. All we have to do is to blink hard and rapidly and water gets pushed out of our eyes, causing no further problems. However, using a fist to rub water in even more doesn't move water out at all. It pushes it in, stinging eyes that are unused to having water in them.

Parents tell a child for years, "Don't go near the water or you'll drown!" Then they are surprised when their child balks at taking instructions from a sopping wet stranger who now tells the child to trust him that he won't drown!

Rainy days in the tub

One way to encourage your child to get water on his face is to take showers. The key is to make it fun. You've given him the means to avoid a problem with water in the eyes by getting him to use his "magic windshield wipers." Take it a step further and let your child have a "rainy day" in the tub.

Gather up the plastic cars and people and create a village in the shower. He's not likely to pay much attention to the possible discomfort of getting water in his eyes if he's sitting on the rubber mat in the tub, letting the people of his town play in the rain.

Just remember to never leave a child unattended in the shower or the tub, not even for a ringing phone. Even careful children can slip and fall, or become a little too curious and turn on the faucets.

Learning to blow

Here's the second way water can cause a problem: when we're surprised, most of us inhale in a gasp, drawing water right up our nose or mouth. This burns or causes a choking reaction.

The solution is to actively do something whenever we are even close to the water rather than wait for the shock when it touches our faces. While it is true that even infants can be trained to hold their breath, it makes much more sense to learn to blow the water away from the face.

For one thing, actively doing something makes it less likely that we will be surprised than if we merely hold our breath. Blowing the water away will also make it less likely for a child to inhale too soon, before his mouth is above water. And last, but perhaps most important, blowing water away is a skill that transfers directly to swimming, since it is a preliminary step in breathing while swimming.

Natural for any age

Learning to blow is possible for children of any age. Blowing pieces of paper away, or blowing bubbles from a wand teaches the same skill. Even reminiscing about blowing out the candles on a birthday cake gets the idea across.

I've had some small children resist the blowing (except in their food at home!) and yet learn to hum, which effectively works the same way as blowing in the water. Either one gives the child an active, positive way of keeping the water from being drawn into the nose or mouth.

It makes much more safety sense to teach our children how to cope with the water, just as we teach them to deal with crossing the street, than it does to try to intimidate them into being safe.

More tub games

More games can be played in the bathtub, too — and not just the usual ones of pushing boats around with your hands. The idea is to familiarize your child with the sensations of water all around him, to experience what it feels like when the water actually supports his body.

There's plenty of room for little ones to stretch out and blow the boat or the rubber ducky around in the tub — just keep the soap out for this part of the bathing routine! When your child has gotten comfortable with blinking water out of his eyes and blowing it away from his mouth, it's time to move on to the next step — realizing what floating feels like.

All about floating

The key to floating is the position of the head. You must keep the head at the same level as the rest of the body, allowing the water to support the body. This doesn't happen as easily when the head is angled up from the plane of the body. Of course, it's possible to float or swim with the head up, but it involves some fairly sophisticated adjusting of body position, far beyond what is easy to explain or demonstrate.

Once your child is thoroughly comfortable with getting his eyes wet and you are sure he avoids getting water drawn into his nose and mouth by blowing it away, you can help him experience the floating sensation right in the tub.

Make sure he remembers to blow as his face goes into the water and let him stretch out and briefly touch his nose to the plug, a rubber mat or some other sunken object in a couple inches of water. Then talk about the way

the water supported him, feeling almost like a mattress.

Be sure that when your child does this you watch him very carefully, making sure he doesn't inhale water and that he stays under for just seconds. Watch, too, that your child doesn't bump his head on the faucet as he comes up. And it goes without saying that the usual rules and precautions about not standing up in the tub and being careful not to slip always need to be enforced and repeated!



A different way to realize that floating sensation is to have him sit down in a tub of chest-deep water and let his arms just rest in the water. Then notice what happens. Chances are his relaxed arms will come up to the surface and hang suspended there. Talk about how his arms feel now that they are floating.

Observing the "real thing"
Demonstrating how people

swim is a little more difficult than you might at first expect. More often than not, the characters you see on television are lounging around a pool or diving rather than actually swimming. When they are swimming it's often a race from danger.

For positive examples, tune in a sporting event that includes swimming and then spend a few moments watching and talking about what's going on with your child.

When you have the opportunity to go to a pool, don't merely consign your toddler to play in the baby pool. Point out someone in the pool who is actually swimming. It's even more impressive if that someone is also a youngster.

Point out that the person's head goes under the water and then comes back up to get little breaths of air while they're swimming. Help your child understand that people can lift their heads up when they want and that they go farther in the water if their heads go back down in the water, streamlining their bodies.

One step at a time

Once your child knows that you think swimming is a wonderful skill, chances are he'll try to impress you with "talking big" about all the things he plans on doing in the water. Usually these boasts of going off the board or swimming the entire length of the pool are in reality ways of testing your expectations.

When your baby learns to walk you don't say, "Okay, now show me how you can run." You're excited about what the child has accomplished and don't frustrate him by demanding more. Why should swimming be any different? Your youngster needs reassurance that his littlest accomplishments will please you as well as him, not that you will expect him to do more.

Children also need to know that we learn in stages, mastering one skill before another. Many parents make the mistake of telling their children that they are "too little" to know how to do some activity. What they really mean is that the child has not yet mastered the skills involved.

If a child thinks he is too little to go off the diving board and then sees someone his size jumping off, it can be a real threat to his security. What if Mom or Dad or the swimming teacher thinks that people his size should go off the board? Does that mean he'll have to go off it, too?

Developing security

Children have developmental limitations when it comes to swimming. There is a physiologically-determined time when they can turn their heads from side to side or do an extended arm reach. But they need to know that most of the skills we learn in life depend less on size and age than on mastering the preliminary steps. If your child knows that no one will even allow him to go off the board until he has learned certain skills first, it will allow him the security of progressing according to set stages.

We all want our children to be safe and also to be successful in their attempts to learn new skills. It makes much more safety sense to teach our children how to cope with the water, just as we teach them to deal with crossing the street, than it does to try to intimidate them into being safe. And playing in the water together can be just as much fun as snuggling together on the sofa to read a book. You can share some fun with your child and get him ready to learn to swim at the same time.

Lynne Gensor has taught hundreds of students to swim in various water programs over the past 20 years. During the school year she is a teacher in Lusby, Maryland.

Talking with little ones

By Marjorie Flathers

While shopping recently with a friend and her daughter, I witnessed a "game" that adults sometimes play with small children. We were waiting in the check-out line, when a friendly woman customer, whom my friend knew slightly, began asking her daughter seemingly well-meaning questions: "Where did you get those big blue eyes?" "How did you get such a cute little face?" Are there really any answers a three-year-old can give to such inquiries?

The game then progressed to "Wouldn't you like to come home with me?"



Bewildered, Shelly looked from her mother to the customer and back again. Even a child just beginning to develop reasoning abilities knows this is a no-win situation. Shelly had been taught not to go with people she doesn't know, yet everyone seemed eager for her to do so. However, if she chose to stay with her

mother, she ran the risk of being called "backward" or "Mommy's girl." This particular game was carried to extremes, with Shelly being bribed with gifts and candy. Finally, she was so confused she burst into tears and buried her head in her mother's skirt, which brought laughter from on-lookers.

I thought back to the many times this same game had been "played" with my own three children. Children can be irresistible, and it's natural to want to talk to them. It was obvious this woman meant no harm, but as is often the case, these questions were asked simply for the entertainment of adults.

In such circumstances, an assertive woman could take charge and with a smile and the right words make the situation less painful. But many young mothers have not developed this much self-confidence. I know I had not at that age, and my friend seemed at a loss, also.

As relatives and friends, however, we can help young children avoid this kind of humiliation. Simple, direct questions, such as "What do you like best to eat?" and "How does that toy work?" can bring forth interesting replies. It may take a little more ingenuity to ask these kinds of questions (and probably a little more patience to listen to the answers), but isn't it worth the trouble, if we are *really* interested in talking with little ones?

If we want to see children grow up friendly and open, don't we have the responsibility to communicate effectively with them and not use their vulnerability as just an opportunity to amuse ourselves?

Marjorie Flathers is a free-lance writer who lives in San Bernardino, California, and writes on subjects of interest to women and families. She has been married 25 years and is the mother of three children.

The tale of the "mommy-Daddy"

By Timothy G.H. Dayton

It's not uncommon today for fathers to do their share of the housework and to participate in child rearing.

What still does seem to be uncommon is fathers who feel that they can be as close to their preschoolers as mothers are. I was one of those fathers until my daughter, Robyn, showed me a different way to be.

For the first year of Robyn's life, her mother, Bonnie, stayed home with her. I played with Robyn and changed her diapers, but we were never very close; not compared to the relationship she and her mother had developed. Bonnie was Robyn's principal parent, the parent she called when she was scared or hurt. I thought this was probably due to the whole birthing experience and the bonding that took place while breast-feeding.

Then Bonnie went back to work outside our home. Since I worked nights, I began taking care of Robyn during the day.

Robyn woke up every morning around 7:30, so I wasn't getting very much sleep. As a result, the first thing that changed was me: The daddy that my little girl had grown used to became vulnerable. We were forced to be together even when we didn't want to be.

We learned how to deal with each other when we were less than perfect. Seldom in the previous year had we dealt with each other in that state. Suddenly, we actually needed each other. I needed her to understand that I had my good and bad days, and that I, too, could be tired and cranky. She needed me to take care of her and love her the way her mother had been doing. We began to talk and play with each other in a way we had

never done before.

In the beginning, Robyn would wake me up with her calls for "mommy." We'd usually have a little crying spell first thing in the morning because she wanted Bonnie, not me. But, after a month or so, Robyn began calling "mommy-Daddy." At first I didn't realize why she was calling me that, but then I noticed that she was calling me when she needed her "mother." If she fell down and scraped her knee, she called for her "mommy-Daddy," not just her mommy as she had always done in the past.

I needed my daughter to understand that I had my good and bad days, and that I, too, could be tired and cranky. She needed me to take care of her and love her the way her mother had been doing.

I had been elevated to the "mommy" level. I didn't need the physical make-up to be her second mother. I just needed to be me.

Robyn and I were together in a way that most fathers can't or don't take the time for. We became close because we were alone so often, and the fact that there was no mother around was the key in the beginning. If Robyn was bad, I disciplined her. If she was good, I praised her. She was stuck with me, and I with her, so we learned to feel comfortable with each other.

Our newfound relationship wasn't without problems. It was noticeable to my wife that Robyn and I were becoming closer and at first she was excited about it. After a while though, she began to feel left out: She had been Robyn's principal parent for over a year and suddenly I was filling that position. We needed to find a happy medium that would

allow both of us to be her principal parent.

We wanted to truly share the childrearing duties in our home so we set up a schedule in order to allow each of us time to be alone with Robyn. The schedule helped us to spread out the housekeeping chores so that Bonnie could spend some of her time in the evening playing with Robyn and doing the things that Robyn wanted to do.

After a while we didn't need the schedule anymore. Robyn had come to think of us as equals. Now it's easy for her to accept whichever parent she is with while the other is out. The real test is when she gets scared or hurt — and now she calls whoever she sees or was with last.

Even when summer came and Bonnie was off from work for three months, Robyn didn't revert back to her old, call-just-for-mommy-self. Our relationship was strong and she allowed us to share her affection.

The process for a father to become close to his children need not be as drastic as staying home with them five days a week. If I had known in the beginning that I could be that close to Robyn, I would have been working on our relationship a lot sooner and more gradually, thereby allowing both Bonnie and me to become close to Robyn simultaneously.

Now we have a new baby girl and I spend a couple of days a week alone with her. It's not easy, but I'm sure the rewards will be worth it. Maybe this time I won't have to be "mommy-Daddy" and I can just be plain old "Daddy."

Tim Dayton is the father of two girls, ages three and six months. He splits the work week and care of the children with his wife.

Growing Child



Readers write
to Growing Child

Mother of autistic child suggests getting help early

Our daughter, Maevis, was late in rolling over, walking, and talking. She was always sweet and loving, but also somehow distant. Since we didn't know many other small children, and didn't want to pressure her into a set mold of development, we ignored—or rather just accepted — her for what she was.

Until she was three. She still was not "talking" to us. We knew she could speak though — she would repeat virtually anything.

After prodding our pediatrician and his associate several times, they referred us to a neurologist. But before this they said all the standard things — she's lazy, she'll catch up, she'll outgrow not wanting to talk.

The long and short of it is that Maevis is "developmentally delayed" — in most likelihood autistic.

If the parent feels that a child's behavior is out of the ordinary, or problematic, as Maevis' was, then you must push the "experts" to delve further.

I am fully aware of the kind of fright it throws into one to face the fact that there even **might** be something "wrong" with a child. When my husband and I decided that our doctor's reassurances just didn't explain her behavior, I cried for three days and nights non-stop. It was simply **the** worst pain I ever had to face. But it's better to go through that than to prolong what may be inevitable, and the sooner you find out what the trouble is, the sooner you can take steps to rectify the situation and help your child.

I suggest all mothers who are concerned check with their local community health centers. It

certainly can't hurt, and may offer the help your child may need.

Wendy Hutson
Philadelphia, PA

Mom shares favorite activity hints

Here are some common sense ideas that have worked in our house:

- My husband and I find it helpful to rotate the children's books every so often in groups of 10 or so. There aren't so many to pick up, and the children learn better care of books. They are also excited to get out the "new" books.

- At meals we "chew the stew," "scoop the soup," "eat our meat," "please pass the peas," and other rhyming actions. Then when we "scoop our ice cream," we hear "Oh, that doesn't rhyme!"

- My little "shadows" have always enjoyed "talking" with Mommy in the kitchen. As I put things in the cupboard or cook by the stove, I tell them just what I'm doing. It isn't long before they point to the microwave, refrigerator, stove, and floor and soon are trying to say those words.

- I put lines on the refrigerator with masking tape for magnetic letters. The children like to put the letters on the lines and can see which ones have "tails."

- The oven timer works wonders for hurrying little ones who take forever when picking up toys in the evening. If they don't finish before the buzzer, the "nasty bag" is filled with the leftover toys and put away for the next day, and they don't get their bedtime poem. A super job also may get a reward. (They do have

to be reminded every five minutes that the timer is going or they forget to pick up and end up playing.) The timer also works when they need help taking turns. After five minutes they must pass the toy on.

Mary Thom
Spring, Texas

More info on college costs

Your article on financing your child's college education omitted an important qualification. If a child applies for financial aid, the Uniform Methodology most schools use to estimate financial need imposes a 35% tax each year on any assets in the child's name, but only a 6% tax on assets in the parent's name. Consumer Reports (June 1985) recommends that families with an income below \$30,000 a year should not shift assets into their child's name; families with an income about \$75,000 should, and those in between have a very complicated problem to solve.

John Hoven
Silver Spring,
MD

"Dear Growing Child" is a forum for our readers to share their personal thoughts, opinions, comments and experiences. We welcome your responses to questions that appear periodically. The letters published do not necessarily represent the views of *Growing Child*.

All letters to the editor will be treated as having been submitted for publication. If you do not want your correspondence published, please specify this in your letter. Names withheld upon request. We reserve the right to edit for publication.

Research Briefs

Excerpts from child development research

Foot specialists approve of sneakers

Cambridge, Mass. — Watching tots cavort in sneakers, the grandparent generation is subject to qualms about arch and ankle support. Can those bright canvas creations really protect a child's feet as the miniature army boots of yesteryear used to do?

Foot experts' consensus: sneakers do the job. Laced leather hightops and oxfords are not only unnecessary expenses, they're unnecessary, reports the *Harvard Medical School Health Letter*. Inexpensive sneakers are perfectly satisfactory for toddlers.

It is not inadequate ankle and arch support that keeps babies off their feet for the first six months or so, but lack of leg and hip strength. Undeveloped balance postpones walking for another few months.

The problem is protecting babies' feet from the cold and from damp and rough surfaces without resorting to shoes. Socks and slipper socks are the answer. When weather and terrain permit, bare is best.

Sneakers come next. "There is not a shred of evidence that leather shoes are better for children's feet than canvas," the newsletter reports. The vital factor is size: the sneakers must be big enough not to cramp toes, but not so big that the tot trips over her own feet.

Research Review
Volume 3 Number 12
August, 1985

Devices to monitor baby's breathing still imperfect

Chicago — If a baby has stopped breathing once for as long as 20 seconds, its parents live in fear of another life-threatening episode. No wonder they may be uncritically receptive to ads for monitoring devices that promise full protection against sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

The American Academy of Pediatrics Task Force on Prolonged Infant Apnea reminds parents with this problem that as yet no monitor can guarantee protection against SIDS.

Infants whose breathing has ceased for as long as 20 seconds (prolonged apnea) are at risk of having another episode, members agree. Prolonged apnea can be a symptom of many disorders, but not necessarily of SIDS.

"The vast majority of infants with prolonged apnea are *not* victims of SIDS. . . . Most SIDS victims were never observed to have had prolonged apnea prior to the terminal event."

Even when parents and physicians decide on a home monitor for the child, "parents should be advised that monitors cannot guarantee against SIDS." Also parents should be aware that monitoring will be evaluated periodically and possibly terminated if the effects on child and household are too negative.

Not every incident of apnea indicates that the baby is in trouble. Brief episodes of apnea are normal occurrences in infants, the task force explains. However, prolonged apnea may lead to disease, though rarely death.

Research Review
Volume 4 Number 15
November, 1985

The American Baby TV Show

| | On CBN Cable Network | |
|------------|----------------------|------------|
| Mondays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| | On SPN Cable Network | |
| Tuesdays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Wednesdays | 8 PM ET | 5 PM PT |
| Thursdays | 2 PM ET | 11 AM PT |
| Fridays | 4:30 PM ET | 1:30 PM PT |

A Journey Through the First Year of Life

| On CBN Cable Network | 8PM Eastern Time |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| September 7 | |
| On SPN Cable Network | |
| September 7 | 11PM Eastern Time |
| Check local listings for channel. | |

Fun things to do in August

An adventure a day keeps boredom away!

By Janet Dengel

Often it's the little pleasures that make children the happiest. Events you thought would be exciting — the circus, a visit to a famous museum — turn out to be a flop, while a walk down the block or a splash in the stream have your children asking "When can we do that again?"

Small children are thrilled with small adventures. You may even find that the slower pace makes you relax and discover things that you normally pass by.

Here are 20 family activities aimed at pleasing small children which can transform your backyard and neighborhood into an adventure land and change your family outings from a hassle to a delight. These excursions take little preparation, cost virtually nothing, can be tied into learning experiences from school or home, and can easily be geared to involve older children.

Fun Right In Your Own Backyard

Relay/obstacle course

Improve your child's physical stamina, ability to follow directions, and memory of sequential order by setting up challenging relay race or obstacle course routes. An example course might be, "Run backwards to the apple tree, swing from the second branch, go down the sliding

pond, jump over the sandbox, and go back to start. Or, elicit cooperation between siblings with, "Leap-frog across the lawn, take turns pushing each other on the swing, play ring-around-the-rosy, then race back to the starting line holding hands. (Cost: \$0)

Treasure hunt

Conduct a hidden treasure search by leaving notes around the yard (which you can read back to your preschooler) that lead from one clue to the next. (Example: the next clue is hidden where squirrels store their nuts.) A prize such as a little toy or a snack can be the reward for the successful detective. (Cost: \$2 to \$3 for little surprises)

Skating and skiing

Rather than packing up the family to go to crowded ski slopes, roller rinks, or other sports centers, your backyard can easily accommodate young athletes. In the winter, arrange logs in a square, lay down a tarp, and fill with water. Wait for three days of freezing weather and you'll have your own ice skating rink. (Cost: tarp-\$8.99)

For skiing, try the cross-country method — an easier, safer way to introduce your child to skis. A few inches of snow can be packed down into a "trail" by pulling a sled-full of children around a course. (Cost: Ski rentals range from \$5 to \$10 per day)

In warm weather, a few rubber traffic cones or empty detergent bottles weighed down with sand can mark off a driveway roller rink, a bicycle course, or a hot-cycle race track. (Cost: \$0)

Neighborhood Jaunts

Take a walk

Take an after-dark family walk. Outfit your children with flashlights for a nighttime adventure that will stimulate both conversations and their five senses.



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Talk about night noises, sights and smells, and nocturnal creatures. This is also a great opportunity to allay the anxiety of a child who is afraid of the dark. (One time cost for flashlights: \$1.99/each, batteries: \$2.49/two pack)

Nursing home tour

A social call to a local nursing home is another way to introduce children to people of all ages and backgrounds. At the same time, your youngsters will surely brighten the day of the residents. This is an especially advantageous trip for children who live far away from grandparents or who reside in a neighborhood with few elderly people. (Cost: \$0)

Small-time zoo tour

Instead of trekking to the city zoo or aquarium, visit a local pet or fish store. Children love animals and will often sit just as happily in front of a fish tank as a TV. The hardest part of this trip is leaving without bringing home a new member of the family. Always stress to your child that owning a pet is a very big responsibility and is not an impulse decision. (Cost: \$0)

Greenhouse tour

Visit a garden center or nursery. Even in the winter, the greenhouses are filled with plants and blooms and promises of spring. Read the names of the plants to your children, discuss growth cycles, and, if you're ambitious, bring home a tray of seedlings for the windowsill as a family project. (Cost: \$3.49 for 1 dozen squares with seedlings)

Harvesting

The autumn is a perfect time to go apple and berry picking, and to turn your bounty into mouth-watering treats. Even the smallest child can be lifted up to get the shiniest apple, and the

pies you make will teach your children measuring and cooking skills. For a variation on apple picking, try collecting wild-flowers. These can be made into beautiful arrangements or can be pressed between two pieces of waxed paper. (Cost: one bushel of apples-\$2.50 to \$5)



A visit to a greenhouse . . . a walk in the rain . . . an excursion to look for birds or bugs . . . it's the little pleasures that make children the happiest.

"Know-your-block" game

Compile trivia information that will help your child become familiar with the neighborhood. Besides knowing their own address, children can learn neighbors' names and who is available if help is needed. Children can also get practice with colors (how many red houses on the block?), counting (how many children live in each family?), and map-making skills if they help you draw a picture of the neighborhood or make a model. (Cost: index cards 79¢, poster board \$2.69, markers \$2.69)

Walk in the rain

A walk in the rain ranks right

up there with a walk in the dark to capture a child's interest and imagination. Too often young ones are told, "Don't get wet," or "Don't step in the puddles." For a change, don all weatherproof gear — boots, slickers, and umbrellas — and head straight for the puddles. See who can make the biggest splash with their feet. Bring out the plastic boats. Look for a rainbow. You may even find yourself abandoning care and singing in the rain. (Cost: \$0)

Adventures Farther From Home, But Not Too Far

Bus and train rides

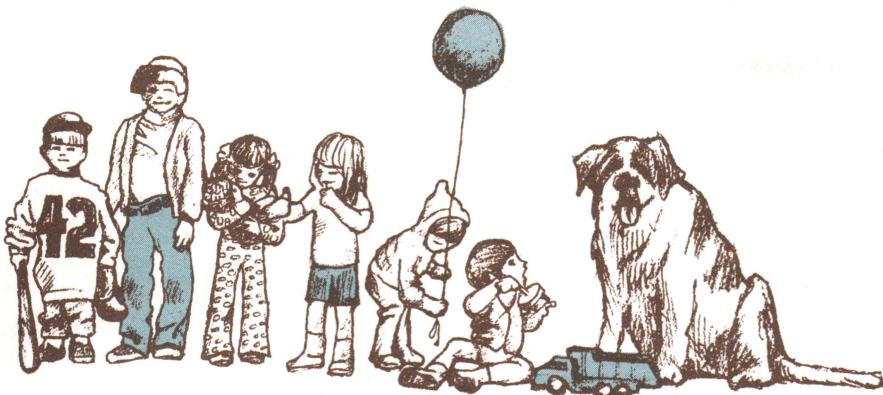
Take a family bus ride or travel on the commuter train. Especially to suburban children who seem to spend their lives in the car, mass transportation is exciting. Know the schedules in advance and start with a short ride. If possible in your area, widen this exploration of transportation to include a trip to a small airport or a ride on a ferry. (Cost: fares vary depending on distance, children sometimes free)

Visit a "soda shop"

You probably remember an old-fashioned soda shop from your own youth, with swivel stools at the counter, the seltzer machine, the freshly-made ice cream sodas, and the short-order cook hustling behind the counter. These neighborhood stores are usually still family-owned and friendly (Cost: \$.99 to \$1.79 for each ice cream soda).

Old neighborhood tour

While in a nostalgic mood, take your children back to your old neighborhood for a tour, if you haven't moved too far away. Children love hearing stories



Small children are thrilled with small adventures. You may even find that the slower pace makes you relax and discover things you normally pass by.

about when their parents were little and will delight in seeing your old house, schools, and playgrounds. For an added treat take along some old snapshots to show your child what you looked like when you were only four feet tall. (Cost: gas money varies)

Architectural tour

Take a walking-tour of an interesting neighborhood. This can be of a nearby historic area or a new contemporary one. My neighbor took her four-year-old daughter to an area with expensive homes, manicured lawns, and cobblestone streets. They not only observed how everyone lives differently, but they were greeted very warmly by the local residents. (Cost: \$0)

Church tour

Visit a local church or synagogue. This is another way to open up understanding among people of different backgrounds and often clears up misconceptions small children may have. A friend's son demanded to know why his family could not celebrate Hanukkah like some of his friends in nursery school. His mother took him to a play at a local synagogue, removing some of the mystery and answering his questions. Many old

churches will astound a small child as they view stained-glass windows, cathedral ceilings and old pipe organs. They will also enjoy the silence of an empty church and will love to visit when they are not required to sit still and behave for an hour. (Cost: \$0)

Scavenger hunt

Organize a nature scavenger hunt. Write up a short list of common items (5 sticks, 4 pebbles, 3 pine cones, 2 acorns, 1 bird's feather) then give each participant a paper bag to fill with their treasures. This exercise will cultivate patience and an eye for detail, plus it can reinforce counting, simple word recognition and an appreciation for beauty. When the bags are filled, use the items for arts and crafts — paint the pine cones, glue together collages, and string up mobiles. (Cost: paper lunch bags 59¢ for 50, paint \$1.89)

Safari adventures

Imagination is the key to a safari adventure as you spin a globe or point at random on a map and pretend your neighborhood is that exotic region. This fun geography lesson may have you searching for Bengal tigers, Australian kangaroos, American buffalo, or tropical parrots. (Cost: world map \$3.99)

Junior birdwatchers

Host an animal-, bird-, and bug-watching tour. Make binoculars by stapling two empty toilet tissue rolls together, painting them, and stringing yarn on one end so they can dangle from your child's neck. City and suburban dwellers can spot squirrels, cats, birds, and ants; country kids may be lucky enough to find deer, rabbits and gophers. Talk with your child about animals' personalities (shy rabbits, loud crows, sly cats, industrious ants). Ask them which animals they resemble in demeanor. (Cost: fancy yarn \$.50)

Walk a stream bank

Take a hike — along a stream. When we go to a local park, it is the little stream my children like even more than the swings, the train, or pony rides. Listening to the pebbles plop in, looking for tiny fish or toads, floating leaves across, and climbing on the embankment can entertain youngsters for hours. A stick with a string and bits of bread for bait make a homemade fishing pole. (Cost: \$0)

Museum visit

Many counties operate their own museums with hands-on children's sections that are well worth a visit. Our local museum features primitive instruments, trick mirrors, a shadow box where a child's image remains on the wall, a touch-and-identify guessing game, and a hologram. Add to this special exhibits and mastodon bones and you have an educational, fun place the kids won't want to leave. (Cost: suggested donations, \$1 to \$2 per person)

Janet Dengel is a freelance writer, reporter, and photographer from New Milford, New Jersey, and is the mother of three children.

Make new friends, but keep the old

When the new baby arrives, old friends who don't have children may depart. Valued friendships can be maintained — with the careful use of compromise.

By Patricia Tarry-Stevens

Many couples today wait until security and stability are just right before they add a baby to their family. And when they do, they often find that the change affects an area of their lives that they may not have anticipated — their relationships with childless friends.

A couple's life changes dramatically with the addition of a new baby. New parents who previously went to cocktail parties, art exhibits, and movie premieres now find their minds occupied with babysitters, feeding schedules, and disciplinary tactics. You go to parenting classes; your childless friends are taking dance classes. You are making emergency trips to the pediatrician; they are going to the symphony.

Your time with old and dear friends — with everyone, for that matter — will be limited. Your interests are different. And so, even though you had no intention of losing dear friends of many years, a drift in old friendships gradually takes place. You may not even realize it at first. All you know is that you're not seeing those friends as often, and when you are, it doesn't feel the same as it once did.

New parents need to realize that old friendships will change after the birth of a baby. People have different reasons for not having children; some do not like them, some are waiting until the time is right, some are simply not able to have them. Sometimes

childless people don't really enjoy children and can't understand your feelings, your child's feelings, or your reasons behind having children. The same way society questions childless couples for not having children, these couples can sometimes question why other people *do* have children.



It is often difficult for new parents to limit their talk about babies. They are so thrilled by every move and sound an infant makes that they don't understand why everyone else isn't as interested.

Whatever the reason, the fact is that none will be as interested in your baby as you are. If you aren't careful and thoughtful, you can alienate, bore, and even

anger those you care about.

This certainly doesn't mean you must forfeit your friends who have no children — only that if the friendship is a meaningful one, you'll need to work to make it survive.

Limit the talk

One way to show your childless friends you care is to limit your talk about babies. This is often very difficult for new parents. They are so thrilled by every move and sound an infant makes that they don't understand why everyone else isn't as interested.

Your friends will probably ask how your child is doing. They would do the same thing if they knew your mother or father was ailing. But your friends who have decided not to have children really don't want to hear the details. They don't know, nor do they really care, when a baby is supposed to walk, crawl, or cut a tooth.

Whenever your childless friends ask you about the baby, keep it short. If they are truly interested, they will keep asking more questions.

For your friends who desperately want children, but for some reason cannot have them, constant talk about your own baby may be very painful. They may take real joy in hearing about the achievements of your baby, but again, take it from their cues. If they ask more questions, they want to know more.

Social etiquette

Having a baby means a whole new set of rules of social etiquette. Where will the child be welcome and accepted?

People who have children themselves are mostly glad if your child comes to play. But no matter what your childless friends may say, you need to be aware of the real feelings behind their words.

Consider the following conversation:

"We're having some people over Saturday to play volleyball. Can you two come?"

"Do you mind if we bring the kids?"

"Oh, I guess so. I don't care. There won't be any other children there, though. Oh, well, sure, bring them, I guess."

This example points out three common problems.

First of all, many people feel uncomfortable around children. They are nervous watching them play and feel powerless to control them.

Second, you won't be able to devote much time to the other adults if you are constantly running after a child.

Third, some adults just don't know how they should behave around children. Can they talk openly, using the same words they use in normal conversation with adults?

Making the decision

How do you decide when and where to take the baby?

There are some fairly obvious places young children are welcome: the staff family picnic at the park, the annual concert at

People have different reasons for not having children: some do not like them, some are waiting until the time is right, some are simply not able to have them.

the zoo. There are also obvious places young children don't belong: the opera, the off-Broadway play for adults only.

These are the easy choices. It is the in-between places and occasions that cause problems. For each occasion that you question taking your child along, ask yourself these questions:

- Will I have to worry the whole time about what my child is doing?
- Will the child be in a good mood?
- Will I really be able to enjoy the occasion?
- Will my friends really be able to enjoy the occasion?
- Will the affair last a reasonable time?

If you can truthfully answer "yes" to these questions, then by all means make the event a family affair. If there are any doubts at all, it's probably better to find a babysitter and go alone.

Compromising strategies

If you really want to maintain

your old friendships, you must make time for them.

Child-care authorities talk about "quality time" for children. Try thinking in terms of "quality time" for your friends as well. Time away from babies can be good for you, and sometimes more can be said in an hour every three months than in fifteen minutes every day. This will all take planning, but you will soon find out which friends you treasure enough to do it for.

The old campfire round goes "Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver and the other gold." Children are an enriching part of life: so are old friends. There is no reason why your childless friends must disappear the moment the birth announcement goes out. By compromising, you can have both.

Patricia Tarry-Stevens is a high school and elementary teacher in Albuquerque, New Mexico, specializing in reading. She is also a childbirth educator and the mother of two children.

Watch for: "A Journey Through the First Year of Life"

A baby's life is one milestone after another: from the first smile to the first step, many dramatic changes and achievements will occur.

A new prime-time television special, "A Journey Through the First Year of Life," guides parents through these changes by highlighting the major steps in infant development, from the helpless newborn to the active one-year-old.

The program will air Sunday, September 7 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time on CBN Cable Network and at 11:00 p.m. Eastern time on Tempo Television, formerly SPN, the Satellite Program Network.

The show is co-hosted by Judith Nolte, editor of *American Baby Magazine*, and Dr. Burton L. White, an educational psychologist and author of *The First Three Years of Life*. Dr. White is also Director of the Center for Parent Education in Newton, Massachusetts.

Using dramatic footage of babies in action, the two hosts interpret the meaning of each stage of development and explain how parents can enhance their infants' growth patterns.

David's big day

By Marjorie Flathers

It was David's first day at kindergarten. We had spent many hours talking together about this long-awaited big day. He was the first of my three children to go off to school, and I wanted everything to be just right.

We had already attended a kindergarten orientation where David met his teacher and some of the children who would be his new friends. And just to give him a little edge, I had helped him learn to tie his shoes, count to ten, and recognize colors.

As we walked the few blocks to Marshall School, I was pleased that he seemed so happy and enthusiastic about this new adventure. When I picked him up four hours later, my confidence was reinforced as he bubbled over with tales of the morning's events.

The next morning, however, it was a different story.

"Why do I have to get dressed so early, Mommy?" David protested.

"Well, to go to school, of course. Come on, now, you don't want to be late."

"School?" He gave me a blank look. "But I already went to school."

"Yes," I replied. "That was yesterday, your first day. Now you have to get ready for today."

"You mean I have to go back?"

"Of course. Children go to school every day," I said in an off-hand manner, trying to hurry him along.

"Every day!" David looked horrified. "But, Mommy, you never told me I had to go every day!"

All through breakfast and on the walk to school, David insisted I tell the teacher that he hadn't known he would have to go every

day, whether he felt like it or not. I promised him I would, and in the classroom, he smiled as he listened to me do so. But when he realized he was going to have to stay anyway, to my mortification, he began pulling on the hem of my blouse and screaming, "Don't leave me, Mommy! Don't leave me!"

After a short period of time, David did adjust to going to kindergarten every day, but that classroom scene continued to haunt me. I was so sure I had explained the situation thoroughly, yet I had overlooked something as obvious as the fact that he would have to go every day. I had been talking to him, but had I really been listening to his responses? Because David had never actually asked about going to school more than one day, I had taken it for granted he understood.

As I thought it over, it occurred to me that when I was building up kindergarten as "special," David had compared it to the other "special" times in his young life — Halloween, Christmas, his birthday, a trip to the zoo, or a visit to Grandma's, all of which lasted just one day. So, since I hadn't said this would be different, he assumed kindergarten would also be just one day. And without the example of older siblings, he had no other guide.

I promised myself right then that whenever I had to describe anything new to David or his younger sisters, I would make an effort to think as they do. I would try to put myself in their places, to feel what it's like to have just a few short years of experience to draw on and to try to get some idea of how their young minds would process the information.

As we grow up, many people, events, and concepts crowd into our minds so that some so-called minor details become, to us, not worth mentioning. But for small children with limited knowledge

and experience, each detail is so important.

Here are some ideas to help prepare youngsters for a new situation:

1. In explaining the upcoming event, choose words carefully, making sure they are words the young child understands. If unfamiliar words are necessary, find the simplest way to explain what they mean.

2. Relate the new experience to other events in the child's memory, and tell how this one will be the same or different.

3. Ask if the child has any questions, and carefully listen for clues that indicate unspoken concerns he or she may have.

4. Don't forget to mention the obvious. Remember that little ones will seldom assume anything.

5. If the pre-schooler is very young and can't seem to articulate what may be on his or her mind, role-playing could help. For example, in a preschool or kindergarten situation, Mommy can be the teacher and act out possible classroom situations. Watching and listening to reactions can target possible problem areas.

At whatever age a child begins to have experiences away from home or begins school, there are nearly always some traumatic aspects. Often this is the first step in the painful process of growing away from the parents. And while we can't ever make the road completely smooth for them (nor would we want to) we can, as I discovered, look for the small pebbles they're likely to stumble over.

Marjorie Flathers is a free-lance writer who lives in San Bernardino, California, and writes on subjects of interest to women and families. She has been married 25 years and is the mother of three children.

Research Briefs

Excerpts from child development research

Parents want pediatricians close and communicative

Chicago — For the first time, patients — not doctors — are in short supply and pediatricians who want to hang onto their patients might want to polish up their communication skills, according to a new survey.

Parents may complain about long waits for appointments, endless sit-ins in the waiting room, and the stand-in who examines their child instead of their chosen doctor, but these irritations don't drive them to change pediatricians. Even foul-ups with bills and problems with parking don't make them look elsewhere for medical care for their youngsters.

The two chief reasons families switch pediatricians are (1) lack of satisfactory communication with the physician and his or her staff and, (2) the advent of a new pediatric practice closer to home, six physicians report in the *American Journal of Diseases of Children*.

The second reason may come as a shock to pediatricians who work hard at maintaining good communication. It seems that even loyal patients who are generally satisfied will make the switch when a new pediatrician sets up practice in their immediate neighborhood.

Research Review
Volume 4 Number 15
November, 1985

Spacing of children may be more critical than birth order

Los Angeles — Spacing between siblings may be of more importance to personality development than birth order, new studies suggest.

The most desirable interval between children seems to be four years or more, University of Tennessee psychologist Jeannie Kidwell reported at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. By that age, a child has had enough

undivided attention from parents to be ready to vacate the throne and go on to more interesting things. Thus, a new baby isn't perceived as much of a threat.

Amazingly, research indicates that a one year interval between children may have fewer damaging effects than the popular two year age difference. The tot who is around one year old when the baby arrives soon accepts the newcomer as one of life's "givens" and can't remember a time when he or she didn't share parents' attention and services.

In contrast, a two-year-old is anything but matter-of-fact about a sibling's appearance on the scene. He may deeply resent relinquishing his regal status. In addition, his self-confidence is still tenuous and his independence is just developing, so the decrease in parental attention can be a real setback with long-range influence.

A survey of more than 1,700 teenage boys showed that youngsters had more negative feelings about themselves and their parents when their closest siblings were about two years away, said Dr. Kidwell. Oddly enough, the negative outlook wasn't there when siblings were under one year or over four years apart.

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Volume 3 Number 13
September, 1985

The American Baby TV Show

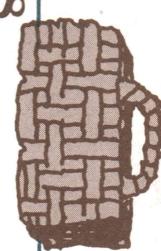
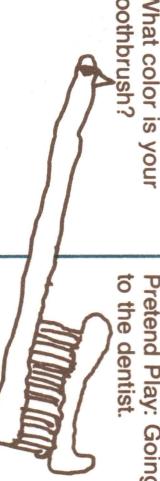
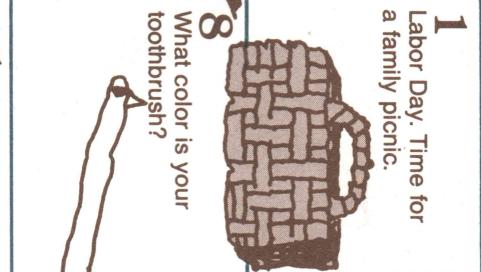
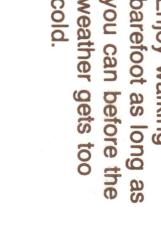
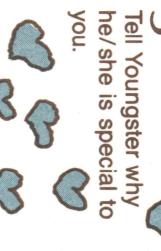
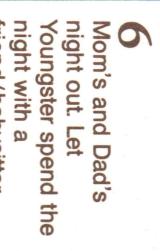
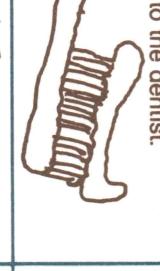
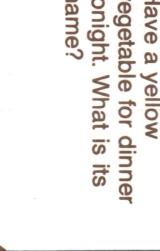
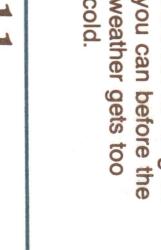
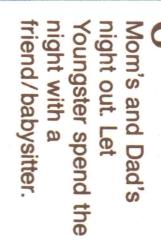
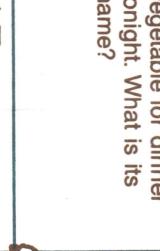
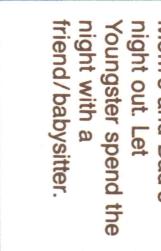
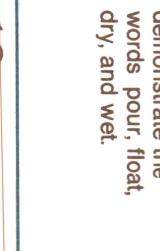
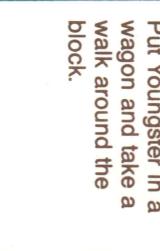
| | On CBN Cable Network | |
|------------|----------------------|------------|
| Mondays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Tuesdays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Wednesdays | 8 PM ET | 5 PM PT |
| Thursdays | 2 PM ET | 11 AM PT |
| Fridays | 4:30 PM ET | 1:30 PM PT |

A Journey Through the First Year of Life

| | On CBN Cable Network | |
|-------------|--|-------------------|
| September 7 | | 8PM Eastern Time |
| September 7 | On TEMPO Television (formerly SPN Cable Network) | 11PM Eastern Time |

Check local listings for channel.

Fun things to do in September

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|--|---|---|----------|
| 1 Labor Day. Time for a family picnic.  | 2 Read to Youngster one book per week in September.  | 3 Have a green vegetable for dinner tonight. What is its name?  | 4 Enjoy walking barefoot as long as you can before the weather gets too cold.  | 5 Tell Youngster why he/she is special to you.  | 6 Mom's and Dad's night out. Let Youngster spend the night with a friend/babysitter.  | |
| 7 Sail a boat in a lake or pond.  | 8 What color is your toothbrush?  | 9 Pretend Play: Going to the dentist.  | 10 Have a yellow vegetable for dinner tonight. What is its name?  | 11 Snack on sliced banana bites.  | 12 Take a bath and demonstrate the words pour, float, dry, and wet.  | |
| 14 Encourage Youngster to pivot while lying on his/her stomach.  | 15 Talk about something you did yesterday.  | 16 Go outside and close your eyes. What do you hear?  | 17 Have a red vegetable for dinner tonight. What is its name? Happy Birthday Matthew!  | 18 Look in a magazine for people with red hair. What color is your hair?  | 19 Mickey Mouse's Birthday. Celebrate with a piece of cheese.  | |
| 21 Find a green leaf and press it in a book and save to compare with a yellow leaf next month.  | 22 Before dinner, name all of the foods you will be eating.  | 23 First day of autumn. How many months does it last?  | 24 Have a white vegetable for dinner tonight. What is its name?  | 25 Play a new kind of music that Youngster hasn't heard and dance to it.  | 26 Give Youngster a foot massage.  | |
| 28 Have a wiener roast.  | 29 Clip clothes-pins to the edge of a plastic bowl.  | 30 Sing "Pop Goes the Weasel" and clap hands on the word Pop.  | | 27 Make Youngster's handprints with paint on white paper. Date and send to a relative.  | | |

Growing Child

A Division of Dunn & Hargitt, Inc.

For children 6 months to 6 years

Growing Parent®

September 1986
Vol. 14 No. 9

Preparing for baby number two

There are many positive steps a family can take to get ready for the arrival of a new baby.

By Katherine Murray

Today parents are becoming more aware of the psychological adjustments a growing family has to make. Many expectant parents want to prepare their first-born in advance of the new baby's arrival.

Even hospitals are getting into the act. Just a few years ago children under the age of twelve weren't even allowed in the hospital lobby — but today, in some places, younger children can see their babies just hours after birth.

One of the newest developments in hospital-family togetherness is the "Mommy's Having a Baby" class which is being given in hospitals all across the country. The aim of these classes is to help prepare the older child for the arrival of

the sibling and to show him where Mom goes to have the baby.

Classes prepare siblings

Four-year-old Niki Hawthorne became a big sister just a few months ago, after going through a sibling preparation class in her local hospital. She took her favorite doll and went to class, just like Mom and Dad, to learn about the new baby in her mom's womb.

One such class is taught by Norma Dunton, a registered nurse at Riverview Hospital in Noblesville, Indiana.



| | |
|--|--------|
| Preparing for baby number two | Page 1 |
| Everyone worries about what Baby Number One will think when Baby Number Two arrives. | |
| Handling temporary separations | Page 3 |
| Planning ahead can help ease the pangs of being apart. | |
| Videotaped message helps ease problems of separation .. | Page 5 |
| Parents can take advantage of video equipment to provide a reminder. | |
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| Raising children is one of the most positive experiences parents will ever have. | |
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tographs of babies. Then, each child colors a picture of a baby, and Norma engages them in different kinds of conversations.

If a child colors for a long time with a blue crayon, Norma may ask for the crayon and replace it with a red one, saying "Do you like blue? I think red is pretty too, don't you? Are you going to be disappointed if you get a red crayon instead of a blue one?" From there, she talks about having brothers and sisters, and how either sex is fine.

Sights, sounds, smells

The children smell baby smells (baby powder, lotion, and oil), taste baby formula, and watch a film about families and new babies. Norma discusses the basics — whether the baby will be able to run when it gets out of Mom's body, whether it will cry, whether it can sing songs.

By practicing with dolls from home, the children learn how to hold and diaper their babies. Norma talks about how small and helpless babies are, and emphasizes how much babies need big brothers and sisters to teach them how to do "the neat stuff."

Niki's favorite part of the class was the tour of the maternity ward. Many children feel anxious when their mother goes to the hospital. Will she be all alone? Will there be people there to take care of her? It helps youngsters to see the place where Mom will be staying while she's away from home.

The children visit a room and play with the "magic" bed that moves up and down with the

Getting familiar

Children from age four on up can participate, although some younger ones have attended. When the children arrive, Norma has then sit on the floor and together they look at pho-

push of a button. Then they put on gowns and masks, peer at themselves in the mirror, and visit the nursery to see a real live baby.

New babies need love

When the children view the babies, Norma shows them the tiny feet, the belly buttons, the little fingers. She tells the children that these are "new" babies, and that they need lots of love so they can grow big and strong.

Then, relax!

After the baby comes, the key word is "relax." Too many parents worry excessively about the adjustment of their older child. As a rule, children tend to be much more flexible than we think they are, and they usually surprise us. You had nine months to adjust to the arrival of the new baby, so don't forget to relax and give your older child time to accept this new competitor for your attention.

Try to involve your firstborn in tasks related to caring for the baby. Perhaps he could be in charge of getting diapers from the changing table or helping with the morning bath. Whatever the task, no matter how small, your older child will feel that he is part of the action. When he is allowed to help, the baby becomes "Our" baby instead of "Mommy's" or "Daddy's" baby.

Time alone important

It's always important to spend some time alone with each of your children each day, but when a new baby comes into the home, this is even more important. Children tend to think that parental love is "diluted" in some way; that is, your love must be weaker because more people are sharing it.

Your older child needs to have that one-on-one relationship with you, even if it's just for fifteen

minutes. Occasional outings are wonderful. Sneak off to the zoo for an afternoon, or visit the library.

Talk about it

How much your child will talk about his feelings will depend greatly on his age. A three-year-old will not verbalize his emotions the way a six-year-old might. Some children will claim outright, "I hate that baby!" Others simply withdraw and keep their feelings to themselves.

No matter what your child says or doesn't say, be tuned in to his messages. Any parent can pick up communications from a child without anything actually being said. When your son throws a fit over sitting in a particular seat at the table, realize that he is probably feeling a little insecure, and instead of blowing up, talk to him about it.

Encourage him to talk, but don't wrestle the words from him. Often, children who are forced to verbalize their emotions wind up relating "imaginary" feelings — they tell you what they think you want to hear.

Share your feelings

Explain to your child that it's

natural to have negative feelings and that your whole family will be learning to adjust to the new baby.

Share your feelings with him. Tell him that you get tired and cranky just like he does, but sometimes just a hug or a smile can make you feel better. Children often feel guilty about "bad" feelings toward the new baby, and by verbalizing it, you are telling him whatever he feels is okay and that you'll love him no matter what.

You can't force your older child to love the baby. Don't try to convince him, "I know you love the baby, even though you don't act like it."

Occasionally, you might mention that the baby seemed to miss her big brother while he was at school, or that when you say his name, she opens her eyes and looks around. The love will come eventually, but only when the pressure is off.

Love, like trust and confidence, cannot be ordered. It must grow over time.

Katherine Murray is a wife, mother of three, and freelance writer and editor in Indianapolis, Indiana. She frequently writes articles about family-related topics.

Additional reading

For Parents:

The Complete Book of Sibling Rivalry, by John McDermott, 1982.

Mister Rogers Talks with Parents, by Fred Rogers, 1980.

Parent Awareness, by Saf Lerman, Winston Press, 1980.

Living with Your New Baby, by Elly Rakowitz and Gloria S. Rubin, Franklin Watts, Inc. 1978.

For Children:

The New Baby at Your House, by Joanna Cole, William Morrow, 1985.

The New Baby, by Fred Rogers, G.P. Putnam, 1985.

When the New Baby Comes, I'm Moving Out, by Martha Alexander, Dial Press, 1979.

Nobody Asked Me if I Wanted a Baby Sister, by Martha Alexander, Dial Press, 1971.

The Wonderful Story of How You Were Born, by Sidonie M. Gruenberg, Doubleday, 1970.

Handling temporary separations

Temporary separations — if planned for and accepted — can work out better than you might think.

By Noelle Sickels

Separations are a fact of life in many families today.

Working parents take business trips, sometimes quite regularly.

Couples vacation apart from their children.

Long-distance moves are made in shifts.

If your family has not yet faced one of these situations, chances are good, modern life being what it is, that you eventually will.

A temporary separation, whether it is a regular occurrence or a one-time experience, affects the whole family. The rhythm of relationships is interrupted. Each person reacts to the separation differently, depending on age, personality, family role, and the type of separation.

Talk about care plans

When both parents will be gone, a child should know ahead of time what the care arrangements will be. A California mother who took a five-week acting job in Spain planned for her four-year-old to stay with his grandparents in New York.

Together, mother and son made a storybook out of construction paper telling what was to happen and why. They included maps, photos of the grandparents and of aunts and cousins living near them, and lists of things the boy would be doing.

When a child is separated from both parents, well-designed care arrangements are crucial to the peace of mind of both child and parents. Adults with whom a child is very familiar and with

whom the child has an emotional bond are ideal. One couple taking a ten-day vacation left their boys, aged seven and three, with close friends who had two children of similar ages. The boys felt that they, too, were on a vacation of sorts.



Preparation is the key

Preparation is the key to helping children cope with a temporary separation. Letting a child know your plans a few days or a week ahead allows the child to work out any negative feelings or anxieties with the parent who is leaving.

Children over three or four years old are usually able to express anger and sadness in words. You may wince when you hear your pre-schooler beg you not to go, but it is more helpful for him to give you that message in person than to have him hold it inside while you are away. Advance warning also gives a child a chance to ask worrisome questions.

By the age of four, most children can handle temporary separations fairly well. By then they have begun to move out of the family circle and to have a sense of self apart from their parents.

Props can help

A pre-schooler's concept of time is often not realistic. Physical "props" can help give a more accurate grasp of how long a parent will be gone. The simple device of marking calendar days is one way to help a child measure time.

One mother, apart from her four-year-old daughter for a week, personalized the countdown of days by leaving seven envelopes with her husband. Each morning the father gave one to the little girl. The mother had written notes on cheerful greeting cards and had enclosed a small gift, like a packet of bubble bath.

For those left behind

As the parent left at home with the kids, you may need some coping techniques of your own, especially if your spouse is away on a regular basis.

Letters or postcards mailed to a child help keep the connection. Phone calls do too, although often children will only listen and not speak when a parent phones. In extended or frequent separations, a child may enjoy exchanging tape-recorded messages.

Preparing for a move

If the absent parent is paving the way for a family move, sending photos and descriptions of the new town or house not only eases the separation but also prepares the children for what they will find in the new place.

It is difficult to prepare a child under three for a parent's absence. They can be told beforehand, but they probably

will not use the lead time for working out feelings as older children do. If the young child is used to having mother home, and father goes away on business, the young child may show little or no response to father's absence.

For the baby under one, it is probably better to avoid long-term separation from mother if at all possible. This is especially true for the breast-fed baby who would have to cope with weaning as well as the anxiety of mother's disappearance.

Your children may engage in some testing to see if the rules are still the same when one parent is absent. Be sure they realize that your expectations for their behavior have not changed. You will all get along better.

If your child is in school, tell his teacher that your spouse is away. Some children show their anxiety by aggressive behavior toward peers.

Besides extra parenting work, you will have to deal with loneliness, particularly the special loneliness that can set in at night when the kids are tucked in and the day's responsibilities are over. Phone conversations and letters give relief, but they cannot eliminate the missing.

Make the best of it

Acceptance of the situation is your first and best ally. One woman whose husband has been out of town every other fortnight throughout their marriage says that the separations were stressful until one day she just decided to stop complaining and accept it. After that, she found the schedule actually strengthened the marriage.

"I have time to be independent and self-sufficient. My self-confidence has been bolstered," she said. "And my husband comes home to us relaxed, peaceful, and fulfilled."

Frequent contact with other

adults, even if only by phone, is important for the parent at home. You need the company and the change of pace from child-oriented interactions. In addition to friends, pets and hobbies can round out your life during separations. "My cats are very therapeutic," said one mother.

Preparation is the key to helping children cope with a temporary separation. Letting a child know your plans a few days or a week ahead allows the child to work out any negative feelings or anxieties with the parent who is leaving.

For the one who leaves

The parent who is away must face loneliness, too. Here, again, phone calls and letters are beneficial.

A travelling salesman who is on the road quite often discovered that the impersonality of strange hotels added to his loneliness. He started seeking out small guest houses instead, and now he has a network of familiar places and "friends." His wife assisted him in building his network by researching magazines for articles on guest houses and by evaluating some of them by phone.

The "away parent" is often ambivalent about his or her absence from the family. Positive feelings such as pleasure in the trip or in the job may mingle with sadness and guilt.

Guilt can come from within. A working mother at an out-of-town conference may think of herself as a neglectful parent, especially if she is enjoying herself. Guilt can also be imposed on you by others. Grandma or the next-door neighbor may raise their eyebrows at your idea of a grown-ups-only vacation. In either case, facing all your feel-

ings and the sources of your feelings will help control guilt and keep it from growing into resentment or self-pity.

When everyone is home

What about re-entry? The newly reunited family may face some adjustments, too.

A couple whose four-year-old son stayed with relatives during a month-long trip found they had to undo an excessive television-watching habit he had developed.

Sometimes after a temporary separation a child's behavior will regress to a less mature level. Toddlers and pre-schoolers may act angry or turn away from the returning parent. In contrast, some children cling more. You may find your youngster crawling into bed with you. All of these responses are usually short-lived.

One mother whose husband takes frequent business trips deliberately backs off from her children the first few days after he comes home. "The kids really need to interact with their Dad intensively at first. One thing they do is a lot of wrestling," she says.

Another woman with a regularly absent spouse also gives her children full access to their father on his return, but she reserves an exclusive time for herself as well.

As in any situation, each family member has his or her own needs and strengths. The temporarily separated family is reminded of this in a special way. Preparation, acceptance, and friendly support can make the challenge of temporary separation manageable and even refreshing.

Noelle Sickels has master's degrees in elementary education and sociology. She is mother of a seven-year-old and currently working as a pre-school teacher, a childbirth educator, and a freelance writer.

Videotaped message helps ease problems of separation

By David M. Mills

One of the reasons young children miss absent parents so painfully is that their ability to make mental images — to remember and picture someone who is not there — is poor. They can't bring up a clear memory with which to comfort themselves.

That's why a videotaped message from an absent parent is one good way to ease the pain of a separation — it gives the child the clear picture he needs.

For any child old enough to have begun watching television and relate to the figures on the screen, a videotape can be very helpful. It provides the combination of action, sight, and sound.

If you don't already own the equipment, a video cassette recorder/player (VCR) can be rented for about twenty to forty dollars a week, and can be hooked up to any television set. The video camera is needed only long enough to make the recording, and can be borrowed or rented for a few hours. You will need to buy a blank videotape, costing six or seven dollars.

When making the recording, you can include scenes of you and your child together, doing familiar things. Also include a three-to-five minute direct message from you.

Set the camera up so you can look directly into it for a full face, or head and shoulders, picture. Speak and look into the camera as if you were speaking directly to your child. Call the child by name, say who you are, and then talk. This may be hard to do, unless you are a television announcer, but remember that your

child won't care about your acting ability or even what you say. Just seeing your face and hearing your voice will make his or her day. Ask that the substitute caregiver show the tape to your child every day.



Most infants under six months need only to have good, substitute parental care during the absence — someone who will cuddle, talk to, feed and change them. But children older than six months, will definitely miss their parent.

When my son, Michael, was seven months old, I left for a ten-day business trip. At that age, he was more strongly attached to his mother and I expected that he wouldn't miss me much. I was right.

However, when he was sixteen months old, I planned a five-day business trip and thought this separation was potentially troublesome for him. He and I were just getting close, and I knew he would miss me. Would he trust me again, if I hurt him by leaving him at this vulnerable stage, when he was too young to understand that I'd be back? I decided to give the videotape idea a try.

It was hard to be natural as I looked into the camera, and said "Hi, Michael, this is your dada." I managed to talk on for a few minutes, and then I taped a few minutes of us playing together.

I asked my wife to play the tape twice a day, in the morning when I would usually be up with him, and in the evening after dinner.

She reported that he had little interest in the scenes of us playing, and perhaps they even con-

fused him because he was not yet old enough to know who that little boy was. Fortunately, he did seem to know who I was.

Michael intently watched my short message directed to him, and smiled, saying "Dada" and pointing at the television. It seemed to make a big difference, especially in contrast to the daily telephone calls. These were mostly a disaster — he didn't seem to understand who I was, and punched the dial buttons instead of talking.

On my return, Michael was not at all upset. Apparently he felt I'd just been gone a short while, since he had "seen" me every day. He showed me his new toys and went right on playing.

David Mills is the Director of the Montlake Institute Family Therapy Training Program, and a family therapist in private practice in Seattle. He is also a parent and a stepparent, and the author of several articles on child care and family life.

From the Editor



Nancy
Kleckner

More 'Joys of Raising Children'

When parents who work at **Growing Child** get together, they do what parents everywhere do — share stories about their children. As I listen, I'm continually impressed by the diversity and variety in individual families, and I'm encouraged by the positive picture most parents paint of their children.

We all need to hear good news from other parents and share our positive experiences as well, both for our own mental health as well as for the benefit of new or potential parents who might be listening.

Each family is unique.

Each family has a unique culture base that has survived for generations. What kind of proof do we have? Answer these questions: What do you know about your great-grandparents? How do you know it?

Of course, our parents passed stories down to us, and we will pass them on to our children.

The stories from your family that will become part of your folklore and history are being made right now, this year, this week, in your home.

The historical is sometimes hysterical.

If you don't have one yet, you will someday have a unique family vocabulary that dates from the time your first child started making his or her thoughts known (not the same as "talking").

For example, my son said "lala" for yellow. Umbrella was "umballa" in his vocabulary. He also had trouble pronouncing words beginning with "l."

So, when he said, "Rady wif lala umballa was here," he meant we'd had a visit from the next door neighbor, who had a yellow umbrella.

Do you know what our family calls an umbrella?

Stories that live forever.

There are humorous stories, too, that survive generations and provide belly laughs when families get together.

One young lady tells about her junior high school class project. She was to teach the family pet to do one trick and she decided to teach their farm dog to heel. So, everytime she went outside and the dog appeared, she would command him to "Heel!" in a very firm tone of voice.

She realized the effect this routine had had on her three-year-old sister when little Amy saw the dog go past the window one day and proudly told her brother, "That's my dog Heel!"

Another mother recalls the story her babysitter told after spending an evening with her two daughters. The five-year-old told the babysitter they could *not* watch the television program she had just turned on because, "My mother says it's too sexual!"

Good times are the 'glue'.

By now you've probably been reminded of a favorite story your family has enjoyed over and over. Or maybe you can recall one or two that you've stored in your memory to repeat for your child when she or he is old enough to appreciate it.

In the early years it's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day chores of childrearing, providing for a family, and just doing hard work. But don't forget to take time to look for and enjoy the unique, one-of-a-kind experiences as well.

Our family experiences are worth remembering; they make up the fabric, color and texture of our lives. Best-loved stories are just another legacy from and to our families, an intangible gift that has no price.

Nancy Kleckner

Research Briefs

Excerpts from child development research

Family units on television don't necessarily reflect reality

New York — A study of the primetime network programs featuring youngsters under 18 showed that TV has been quick to reflect trends but not realities. Children did not find many aspects of themselves or their own lives mirrored on their favorite programs, reports the National Commission of Working Women.

Children on TV do live in single-parent families, but not in the straitened circumstances or actual poverty that characterizes many such households. TV mothers work — but as executives or entrepreneurs, or maybe cops or spies. When both parents work, TV children are left in the company of amusing hired help or picturesque relatives. And families on television shows have few visible money worries and very visible middle-class conveniences and luxuries.

In actuality, seven million children under age 14 take care of themselves after school. Still more in average or below average day care centers or other care circumstances. The median income for families with two working parents just clears the \$30,000 mark.

Twenty-three network comedies and dramas include children in their cast of characters. Most TV shows depict the doings of white families. Black children — with the exception of those on "The Bill Cosby Show" — live with white guardians who have adopted them. They are also shown as upper-middle class or higher. In reality, one out of two black youngsters is living in poverty.

In "getting with it," TV tends to outdistance trends and establish them as the norm. For example, although four out of five U.S. children live with both parents, only four shows depict children who are living with both parents. Two-thirds of the youngsters in television stories live with one parent, in stepfamilies or with guardians.

Research Review
Volume 4 Number 16
December, 1985

Bedtime delays: a universal problem

Columbus, Ohio — By the time parents get their preschoolers to bed, they're about ready for bed themselves.

Researchers from the department of psychiatry at Cornell Medical College studied 109 middle-class families over a period of five years and concluded that youthful procrastination and parental frustration are normal.

Older preschoolers, four- and five-year-olds, are the most expert delayers of the inevitable and the most likely to ask for a night light. Seventy-five percent of the kids summoned their parents back to their bedsides for additional stories, kisses, glasses of water and confidences.

Almost 90 percent went through periods when they required more than half an hour to get to sleep. Ninety-five percent awakened in the middle of the night at least once a week during some phases of development.

Fifty percent of two- and three-year-olds wouldn't go to bed without their special blanket or plaything to keep them company, but after three their dependence tapered off.

Research Review
Volume 3 Number 12
August, 1985

The American Baby TV Show

| On CBN Cable Network | | |
|----------------------|-------------|------------|
| Mondays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Tuesdays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Wednesdays | 8 PM ET | 5 PM PT |
| Thursdays | 2 PM ET | 11 AM PT |
| Fridays | 4:30 PM ET | 1:30 PM PT |

A Journey Through the First Year of Life

| On CBN Cable Network | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| September 7 | 8PM Eastern Time |
| September 7 | 11PM Eastern Time |
| Check local listings for channel. | |

Fun things to do in October

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|

Growing Child

Division of Dunn & Hargitt, Inc.

For children 6 months to 6 years



5
Lie down with Youngster and take a nap together.

6
Let Youngster choose his/her favorite fruit for dessert.

7
Go outside and look for squirrels. What are they doing?

8
Read an old folk tale to Youngster.

9
What color is the sky today? Are there any clouds?

10
Save old bread crumbs and heels to feed to the birds.

11
Go for a walk and look for different colored leaves—feel their textures.

12

Columbus Day. What does this day mean to us?

13
Thanksgiving Day in Canada.

14
Reinforce rhythm for Youngster—put on music and clap hands to the beat.

15
Apple cider for lunch. What makes cider different from juice?

16
Go into the living room. Find something that is: round; brown; tall; heavy.

17
Look for things outside that are orange.

18
Hang Indian corn in the doorway. Talk about the different colors.

19

Start to make a Halloween costume.



20
Buy oranges and squeeze them for fresh juice. What color is an orange?

21
Find a yellow leaf to press in a book. (See Sept. 21.)

22
What words rhyme with fall?

23
Look at your arms. Use the words elbow, skin, and bend.

24
United Nations Day. Do you know the name of another country?

25

Plant tulip bulbs for next spring.



26
Weigh your pumpkin on the bathroom scales.

27
Bake a pumpkin pie. Mmm-mmm.

28
Draw a picture using black and orange crayons.

29
Talk about Halloween safety rules.



30
Happy Halloween! Have a safe and happy day!



31
Happy Halloween! Have a safe and happy day!

You care for mine, I'll care for yours: Babysitting co-ops fill many needs

By Tina Wright

What many parents of young children need most is a little time. Often you hear the advice, "Be sure to take some special time out just for yourself" — but that's sometimes easier said than done. For many parents, money is tight and dependable babysitters are hard to find.

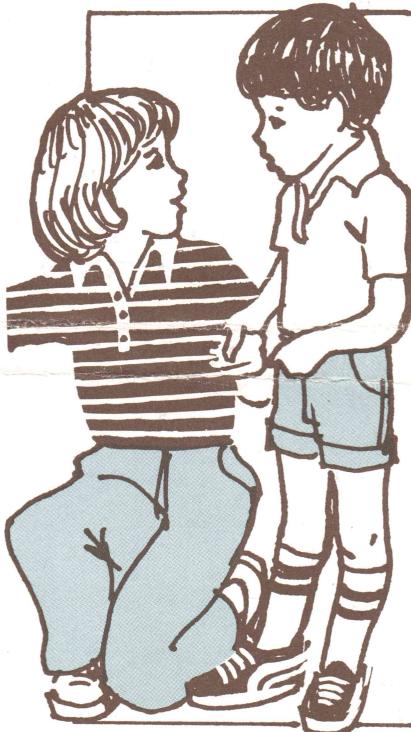
One way to meet the need for inexpensive, quality child care so you can have time for yourself is to pool resources in a babysitting cooperative (co-op) where you exchange child care services with other parents. It's a "You take care of mine and I'll take care of yours" arrangement that can fill many needs.

The advantages

Co-ops are based on the theory that parents make good babysitters and that it is better to pay for babysitting with time rather than with money.

Co-ops give parents the opportunity to get out for an occasional lunch, shopping trip, appointment, or class without children in tow while the children are cared for by a member of the co-op at no expense. And the children get the companionship of other children, the novelty of playing with different toys, and a break from their daily routines.

Although each parent in the co-op pays for babysitting-time



with sitting services in return, many find this to be an advantage. The children enjoy the company of the other children, even if they are not the same ages. One co-op member says: "Some of my best experiences have been with children younger or older than my own. When I cared for a baby, my preschoolers enjoyed gathering up their old baby toys to amuse her."

For parents expecting or contemplating a new baby, caring for a baby of another co-op member can be a good way to introduce

an older child to the idea of having a baby in the house.

How co-ops work

In a co-op, members care for the children of other members and get babysitting time in return, although not necessarily from the same person. In order to keep track, members are given cards, tokens or credits for time spent babysitting.

If cards or tokens are used, the parent "pays" the provider with them. For example, if your co-op uses computer cards that each represent thirty minutes of babysitting time, you would get four cards for caring for another member's child for two hours. You then use those cards to "pay" someone to care for your children.

If credits are used, members report to a record-keeper each time they keep another member's child. The record-keeper then adds the proper number of credits to the provider's account and subtracts them from the user's account.

In this issue

You care for mine, I'll care for yours:

Babysitting co-ops fill many needs Page 1

A simple how-to answers many questions about how co-ops work.

Sample rules for babysitting co-ops Page 2

Family rules work best when they are tailored to fit Page 4

Just as people are different, so are families and the rules that work best for each one.

The Back Page Page 6

Research Briefs Page 7

Using credit

To get started, each new family is given a certain number of cards, tokens or credits. When that family leaves the co-op, they must return at least the same number of cards or tokens. If they cannot do so, they pay into the co-op's treasury an agreed upon amount — a dollar for example — for each card, token or credit they owe.

Co-ops tend to be used mostly for short times, usually not more than four hours, since most parents are more willing to babysit for shorter periods. Although co-ops are not intended to serve as a primary child care arrangement for working mothers, they can be an emergency back-up.

For parents expecting or contemplating a new baby, caring for a baby of another co-op member can be a good way to introduce an older child to the idea of having a baby in the house.

Making arrangements

In some groups, parents make their own arrangements for child care using a list of co-op members. Members may refuse to babysit for any reason, but they are required to keep their balance of credits at a minimum level.

Other co-ops appoint a secretary who makes all the arrangements. Since the secretary's job is fairly time-consuming, the position may be rotated as often as twice a month. Each member is required to serve as secretary or compensate the secretary with cards or credits. Our co-op tried both systems, and settled on the secretary system because it helped integrate new members into the group more quickly.

To help members get ac-

Sample rules for babysitting co-ops

By Barbara Morrow

Each babysitting co-op group will develop its own methods and guidelines. Here is a sampler of rules to start with.

- A new member must be recommended by a co-op member in good standing. She will be interviewed in her home by the chairman and the secretary at which time she must demonstrate an understanding of co-op goals and rules.
- Members receive a list containing each member's name, address, telephone number, children's names and birth dates, pediatrician's name and phone number and the number of someone a sitter can call when parents cannot be reached in an emergency.
- Sitter is to remain with children at all times. Children may not play outside unsupervised. Sitter may give verbal reprimands only.
- Sitter will transport children only with mother's permission. Car seats and/or seat belts will be used at all times.
- Sitter and parent will agree on time of departure and return. Parent will be charged double points for any overtime unless she obtains sitter's permission to be late.
- No more than six children, including sitter's own, may be in sitter's care at one time. Sitter may care for only one infant (under 1 year old) other than her own at one time.
- If parent cancels with less than four hours notice except in an emergency, she will forfeit points for scheduled time. If sitter must cancel, she will find a replacement within the co-op. A sitter who fails to present herself for a scheduled sit will forfeit points for agreed upon hours.
- Sitter will be informed of any special circumstances and care requirements such as allergies, favorite snacks, naps, etc. Parent will supply any necessary baby furniture.
- Any problem that cannot be settled between the sitter and the parent will be reported to the chairman and be counted as a formal complaint unless the chairman rules otherwise. Three complaints can result in a vote to expel a member.
- A member unable to attend a scheduled meeting will inform the chairman. Unexcused absences from two consecutive meetings can result in expulsion.

Barbara Morrow is a part-time freelance writer, full-time mother of two children and an experienced co-op member.

quainted with each other, most co-ops meet on a regular basis. Some meetings have speakers on topics of general interest such as home safety, food preparation, gardening or financial planning. In lieu of one of our spring meetings, our co-op plans a

"night out" at a local restaurant. We also hold a holiday party instead of a December meeting.

Possible drawbacks

Some parents might hesitate to join a co-op because they are not sure about the quality of care

the children receive. One co-op member who experienced this initial reluctance says, "After I joined a co-op I realized that parents are the best babysitters in the world. They love children and know how to deal with emergencies. We trust our children to teen-agers who are not nearly as well qualified.

Many co-ops require that new members be "sponsored" to make sure that someone knows them before they join.

New parents may also shy away from babysitting co-ops because they doubt their ability to handle children other than their own. Experience will help build confidence, so start by caring for one other child for a short time. If a particular child is difficult to handle, remember that you can always refuse the next time you are asked to take care of that child.

How to start a babysitting co-op

If you are interested in a babysitting co-op but cannot find one in your area, you can start one yourself. Co-ops are most convenient if the members live fairly close to each other. If you can find a few families in your area who are interested and each of them can get a few others involved, you will have enough to get started.

The number of co-op members should be large enough so that the services can comfortably be spread around but small enough so that members can become well acquainted and the group can fit in living rooms for meetings. Co-ops typically have 15 to 30 members.

Once you have a group together, begin by holding an organizational meeting to draw up bylaws and elect officers. The bylaws should include such things as the geographical area from which members may be drawn, the methods for account-



Even if you are not generally a "joiner" and have no experience caring for children other than your own, you may be surprised at how comfortable you feel as a member of a co-op.

ing for time and arranging for care, the frequency of meetings and attendance requirements, officers' duties, the maximum number of members.

Once your co-op is in business, you will undoubtedly need to adjust the rules or make new ones. A mother who helped form a 30-person co-op says, "Our rules are constantly changing. As problems arise, we make new rules to solve them."

The dividends

Apart from the obvious benefits in terms of babysitting, many parents have found that co-ops meet other needs. Those who are new to parenting or new to a neighborhood can establish friendships and get moral support. When I was the president of our co-op, I got a call from a woman new to the neighborhood whose husband was frequently transferred. "Joining a babysitting co-op is the best way that I have found to make friends in a new neighborhood," she said.

Members of co-ops often share baby equipment as well as information about pediatricians, preschools and babysitters.

A co-op also provides a group structure that can be used for other things such as community action, fundraising and education. One co-op was able to mobilize homeowners to oppose a zoning change unfavorable to the neighborhood. Another co-op took advantage of CPR training offered by the local fire department.

Joining a babysitting co-op is an excellent way to get time away and, at the same time, make new friends for yourself and your children. Even if you are not generally a "joiner" and have no experience caring for children other than your own, you may be surprised at how comfortable you feel as a member of a co-op.

Tina Wright is a mother of two young children, a corporate attorney and freelance writer.

Family rules work best when they are tailored to fit

By Bonita Kale

Amy's daughter is only fifteen months old, but she has some pretty strong likes and dislikes already. One of the dislikes is green peas. Another is the medicine that the doctor recommends for fever.

Amy feels comfortable letting the child reject the peas — after all, she reasons, malnutrition isn't a big problem among middle-class toddlers. But the medicine is a different question. Is it worth making an issue of? And if so, how much of an issue is it worth?

When Bonnie and Diane shop together, their toddlers demand cookies. Bonnie gives in and Diane refuses. Is one way better than the other, or is each mother doing what is best for her and her child?

Everyday questions

This kind of question comes up almost every day for first-time parents. What rules shall we lay down, and how hard are we willing to work to enforce them? Does it matter if Lisa wants to sleep in her clothes? Does it matter if she wants to ride to the mall without her car seat?

"Playing it by ear," or "crossing the bridge when we come to it" is the way most of us handle these kinds of questions. The trouble with this approach is that we may find ourselves playing by another person's "ear" — our mother's, perhaps, or our best friend's. Some thought beforehand can help us find our own ear and develop our own consistent pattern, based on our own standards for our children's behavior.

Recognizing reality

In the world of our dreams, when we say, "Hop, darling," our children say, "How high, Mother dear?" It takes a very short time to learn that life isn't like that.

Children, too, must learn that the world isn't at their beck and call. But no parent has a generic child, and no child has generic parents; all have personalities of our own. The years of childrearing are years of continual adaptation — child to parent and parent to child. The rules we make can help clarify for our children the ways in which we expect them to adapt to our standards.

Our standards must adapt, too, to the realities of our children's ages and personalities, but almost all of us have some absolutes — behaviors that we must insist on if we are to feel comfortable with our children and successful as parents.

Safety: an absolute

I said we aren't generic packages, but in one regard we are. We are all made of flesh and blood. The living body, so precious and in some ways so fragile, is what parents' safety rules are designed to protect. We childproof our houses. We teach our children to stay away from the stove and the street. We don't move the car until the belts are buckled and the small children are in their car seats. These rules will do for all of us; they don't require any careful scrutiny or individual modification.

Rules are for people

It is the other rules — the bedtimes, the noise level regula-

tions, the company and family manners — that need scrutiny. And as we consider our rules, we consider the people involved in them — ourselves and our children.

"This room is a pigsty," Mother says. "From now on, I want you to clean it up every night before bedtime."

All well and good, if Mother has thought things through. Is she going to send the child in to clean early enough that bedtime isn't delayed? Is someone going to spare the time to help and encourage the child as he cleans? If the parents aren't ready to work at enforcing a rule, the rule won't work; it will merely confuse the child and make the parents feel impotent.

Perhaps Mother should consider whether it is really necessary for her peace of mind and her child's training that he clean his room each night. The messy room may not really bother her much, as long as Grandma doesn't see it. Maybe Saturday mornings would be more convenient for cleaning than weekday nights. Or Mother may even prefer to clean the room herself, using the opportunity to weed out old coloring books and bits of junk.

Different options

Amy, whose daughter hates medicine, eventually decides not to make a fuss about it, unless the child's fever is quite high. She does, however, try several different brands of the medicine, and finally finds one (the most expensive, of course!) that her daughter will take.

Another mother took a different approach. Her boys hated oral medication so much that she arranged for them to take almost everything they needed by injection. Her inconvenience and their pain seemed to her a fair price for averting a four-times-a-day battle.

And I took a different ap-

proach from either of these. By the time my children were two, they swallowed even the worst-tasting medicine by themselves. To achieve obedience in this matter, my husband and I went through one or two nightmarish scenes with each child. The code word was medicine;" the children soon learned it meant "no quarter."

Our methods were forceful. I remember kneeling astride a child and squeezing his mouth open, while explaining over his screams what we were doing and why.

For us, I think it was the right thing to do. One of my private nightmares was that a child would get seriously ill and fight his medicine when he was old enough to fight effectively. A scene with each toddler bought us a series of peaceful childhood illnesses. The children perhaps would not have agreed that it was worth it, but they adjusted to the parents that nature dealt them.

Who gets cookies?

Bonnie and Diane often shop together. Their toddlers each demand cookies in the store.

Diane is willing to put up with a crying child now and then to enforce her "no begging in the store" rule. She often buys her son a cookie, but never when he demands it. Instead, she explains, "I can't get you one today, because you forgot and asked for it, but maybe next time." Diane finds this routine a bit of a nuisance, but not as much as she would find a child who habitually demands things in stores.

Bonnie, on the other hand, is less bothered by nagging children. She sees no reason to refuse a cookie she would have bought anyway, just because her son mentioned it before she had a chance to get it. She thinks Diane is rather cruel, and Diane thinks Bonnie is a pushover.

Too much noise?

At home they have differences, too. Bonnie's son is learning to play quietly when he's in the living areas of the house because his mother puts him in his room or outdoors every time he begins to yell and run. Outdoors, he can shout all he wants, but Bonnie cannot tolerate much noise in the house.

Diane's son, on the other hand, runs riot even when Diane has work to do or a friend to talk with. Diane seems hardly to notice his noise. When he dashes by, screaming and waving a plastic sword, she says, "Hey, quiet down a little," but it's a mere matter of form.



Both of them (and Diane's guests) know that he's not going to quiet down. Diane seems able to tune out everything short of a cry of pain. Bonnie doesn't understand how Diane can be so lenient; Diane thinks Bonnie's insistence on quiet is selfish.

So which child is being "spoiled?" Which is learning bad habits? It depends on your standards. Diane's child is easy to shop with and noisy to live with; Bonnie's is a nag in the supermarket and a delight at home. The children are adapting to their parents, learning what their parents can take and what they can't.

Standards: A compromise

A set of standards is a compromise between parents and children. Sometimes the patching shows, but a rule that sounds foolish may work best for you.

In our house, the rule is, "Everyone eats what we have for dinner or goes without, except David, who gets ravioli when we're having pizza." Now, I know that that's a very strange rule. It was formed from the interaction of a child who loathes pizza and a family who regards pizza as a special treat. It certainly isn't a rule we could recommend to another family. But it's our rule, tailor-made, and it fits us exactly. Pizza is not one of our absolutes.

Absolutes matter

What are your absolutes? What are the things you just can't stand a child to do, or conversely, what are the things you insist on?

When your child falls asleep in her clothes, are you happy to take off her shoes and put her to bed? Or does it make you itch all over to think of her in that crib, unbathed, unpajamaed, and un-toothbrushed? If it does, and you're willing to go through the trauma of waking her, by all means do so. She'll adapt. Of course, she may adapt by staying awake until midnight, helping you test your devotion to baths and pajamas! Thus your individual standards and your individual child knock the corners off each other.

Children need standards to live up to. But only you can determine the rules to fit your individual family, to make a pleasant life for all of you to share. Only you know your child's capabilities and your own absolutes.

Bonita Kale is a free-lance writer and mother of three from Cleveland, Ohio.

The Back Page

Dr. Bob

Poisoning update

Poisoning is still one of the most common accidents of childhood. Children are innately curious about what is in all those jars, bottles and cans and if they can open them, they are likely to "test" the contents' poisoning potential.

New products come on the market constantly, so research in this area must be constant and reports of new findings and recommendations made available to parents as soon as possible.

Alcohol intoxication

Several recent reports have emphasized a new poisoning danger: alcohol intoxication from perfumes or colognes.

These products used to be considered "safe" and some still are. However, for others the concentration of alcohol in the product, combined with the child's small size has caused some serious poisonings.

What to do

Prevention is still the first line of defense against poisoning in childhood.

An added danger with perfumes and colognes is that they are in small, attractive containers that are easy to pick up and open. So, add them to your list of items to keep out of reach.

Proper treatment is vital

If your child has swallowed a poisonous substance, emptying the stomach by vomiting is still rated #1 in the treatment of poisoning and syrup of ipecac is still the best product for doing this.

The guidelines for use of syrup of ipecac in the home have recently been reviewed and the following are recommended:

Do not use ipecac if the poison contains the following:

- (1) Petroleum products (gasoline, kerosene, fuel oil, furniture polishes, paint thinners, lighter fluid);
- (2) Caustics (lye, hair bleaches, wart removers, toilet bowl cleaners, rust removers).

Correct dosage

The dosage for ipecac as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics in its book entitled, "Handbook of Common Poisonings in Children" (Second edition, 1983) is:

1-10 years of age: one tablespoon or three teaspoons.

Greater than 10 years of age: two tablespoons or six teaspoons

Children under one year of age can be given 1-2 teaspoons, however, it is recommended that this be given in a hospital setting.

For your information

For those times when you need to know immediately, put the telephone numbers of your doctor, Poison Control Center, and Emergency Room near your telephone.

Also, you can contact your Poison Control Center for a free home poison safety check pamphlet and a list of poisonous plants.

The American Baby TV Show

| | On CBN Cable Network | |
|------------|----------------------|------------|
| Mondays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Tuesdays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Wednesdays | 8 PM ET | 5 PM PT |
| Thursdays | 2 PM ET | 11 AM PT |
| Fridays | 4:30 PM ET | 1:30 PM PT |

A Journey Through the First Year of Life

| | On CBN Cable Network |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| December 7 | 8PM Eastern Time |
| December 7 | 11PM Eastern Time |
| Check local listings for channel. | |

Research Briefs

Excerpts from child development research

Child care fathers tend to change their minds

Detroit — Arrangements where fathers stay home to take care of their preschoolers while their wives go out to work don't last very long, results of a small follow-up study indicate. Four years after, only five of 20 fathers who had adopted mothers' traditional role were still in charge of the children.

University of Michigan researchers Norma Radin and Rena Goldsmith noted that four of the steadfast five fathers who continued as chief caregivers were bringing up daughters. Perhaps, they speculate, girls are easier to be with and the men were therefore less motivated to transfer the household helm back to their wives.

On the other hand, study findings showed that fathers' participation in childrearing decreased significantly over the four years in the 23 families with daughters, whereas their involvement with their sons remained steady over that period. Perhaps as the preschool boys grew up a bit and looked to their fathers as models and mentors, the fathers filled the role their boys assigned them, the researchers theorize.

In 1977, when the research was begun, 59 families participated — 20 of them with fathers in charge of the children, 20 with mothers the principal caregivers and 19 with both parents sharing childrearing tasks as time and work hours permitted. At the time of the 1981 follow-up, 47 families were still intact and available.

The researchers found that the greatest changes in childrearing patterns had occurred in the turn-about households, where fathers were chief caregivers. Here the attrition rate was 75 percent — close to the dropout rate (after two years) in a similar Australian study. Radin and Goldsmith noted that a precipitate fall in father-involvement had also taken place among Swedish husbands who had taken paternity leave from their jobs to care for the children 16 months before.

Why do they quit?

The U.S. fathers who switched back to a more traditional childrearing role said they did so because of financial and career factors, and changes in their offsprings' need. Very few acknowledged that pressures from peers and relatives had anything to do with their decision. This was a very different response from that of Australian fathers who had done the same thing. These dads admitted that peer pressure had been the primary reason for their return to traditional child care arrangements.

*Research Review
Volume 4 Number 5
May, 1986*

Nature vs. nurture again: Why are fat children fat?

New York — Fat children often have fat parents and a controversial new study seems to prove that their obesity is inherited rather than the result of exposure to poor eating habits.

An American/Danish research team studied 540 Danish children who had been adopted at an early age. They found no correlation between the girth of the young subjects and that of their adoptive parents. However, the children did consistently mirror the shapes of their natural parents.

This finding prompted Dr. Albert J. Stunkard, head of the team, to state that "childhood family environment alone has little or no effect" on stoutness. Despite the results, he does not believe that genes are destiny. A child with overweight parents can fight any propensity for fat by special weight control measures, including exercise.

*Research Review
Volume 4 Number 6
June, 1986*

Fun things to do in November

Sunday

Monday

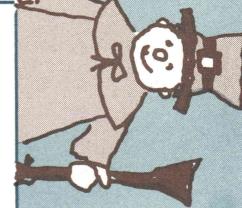
Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

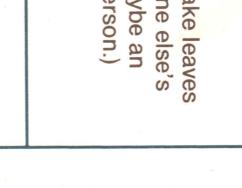
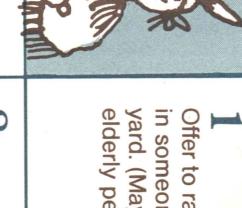
Saturday



Growing Child

A Division of Dunn & Hargitt, Inc.

For children 6 months to 6 years



2
Make this a month to practice saying please and thank you.



3
Talk about "What I Like About Myself!" Like _____ I like _____ because _____.

4
Play with a funnel in the bathtub. Why won't the water stay in it?

5
Does Youngster know Mom and Dad's name in case he/she gets lost?

6
Try to pick up a marble with your toes. (Don't let Baby put small marbles in his/her mouth.)

7
Where are your elbows?

8
Save a big cardboard box for Youngster to play in.

9
Make a puppet out of an old sock. What will you name him?

10
Gently, without scaring, play "I'm Going to Catch You!"

11 ★
Veteran's Day. Do you know a veteran?

12
Hug a friend today. Twice.

13
Ask Dad what his favorite color is, and then look for that color in the house.

14
When you go to the grocery, let Youngster pick out a fruit. What is it?

15
Play "This Little Piggie."

16
Hold hands under water and talk about what warm and cold feel like.

17
Book Week Celebration, November 17-23. Read a book together out loud.

18
Go through a magazine and look for circles.

19
Crawl down a hallway together.

20
Play "This Little Piggie."

21
Wear something with brown in it. Say the word "brown."

22
Go to the library and look for a book on Thanksgiving.

23
Circle all the 3's on this page.

24
Trace your hand and make a turkey.

25
Make up a poem using the word "Thanksgiving."

26
Talk about things for which you are thankful.

27
Have a Happy Thanksgiving—from Growing Child.

28
Don't go Christmas shopping today. Spend a relaxed day with your family.

29
Hot oatmeal with cinnamon for breakfast. (Tell Mom & Dad thanks!)

30
Go outside and look for winter birds.

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Is your child gifted?

By Joan Wester Anderson

At eleven months, Tommy had not uttered a single word. Then one day a neighbor brought her newborn to visit, and the infant began to cry. "He's making noise," Tommy calmly observed.

One-year-old Becky can sit for at least ten minutes, absorbed in the story Mom is reading to her older brother. And when Mom asks Brother to find a certain picture on the page, Becky often finds it first.

At three, Jimmy is the youngest child in the park gymnast class, but he was admitted because he can already perform the routines better than any of the older students.

Tommy, Becky and Jimmy are probably "gifted" children, a label that some professionals dislike, but one that identifies them as youngsters who are achieving developmental milestones earlier than their peers. About three to five percent of American children are gifted, and perhaps yours is one of them. How can you tell? And what should you do if your child is gifted?

How can you tell?

In identifying the truly gifted child, it's important to understand that almost every youngster has something that he can do better than most children of the same age. A preschooler

might speak earlier or more distinctly than his playmates, or he may have an unusual skill such as singing on key or riding a two-wheeled bike. A baby may roll over, sit up or walk far earlier than the charts predict.

The truly gifted child, however, tends to be extra-ordinarily capable in more than one area, and has broad-based interests (although he may later excel in one area). Giftedness is not limited to intellectual capabilities either; it can also encompass artistic and/or athletic prowess.

Giftedness can actually be "lost" if it is not stimulated from the start, so the parents of a gifted child will probably play the most important and earliest role.

According to the American Association for Gifted Children,* it is almost impossible to determine whether a baby a year old is gifted. "A ten-month-old who talks in complete sentences or not only takes apart a machine but puts it back together again would be suspected of being gifted," says James Webb, president of the organization, "but because infants develop at an uneven rate, there's no real way to be sure."

The director of Northwestern University's clinic for the gifted agrees. "One can pick up clues



in behavior as early as eight months," says Joyce VanTassel-Baska, "but children cannot really be tested for giftedness before the age of two-and-a-half." Northwestern and other clinics recommend Burton L. White's book, *The First Three Years of Life* as a definitive guide

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to early childhood behavior. If a baby exceeds most of Dr. White's norms, the baby is probably gifted, even though tests can't measure it yet.

By the time your child is two or three, you can probably spot signs of giftedness. Ask yourself the following questions:

• Is his vocabulary advanced?

The number of words learned and used is not as important as the complexity of ideas expressed.

Most two-year-olds, for example, will say, "There's a doggie." A gifted Two might report that "There's a white doggie in our yard, and he's knocking down the bushes." When Tommy commented on the noisy baby, he not only demonstrated logical thinking but a concern for others — two concepts far advanced for his age range.

• Is she keenly observant and curious? Does she learn easily, so that you have to explain something only once?

All toddlers ask questions, but a gifted youngster will pursue a subject until she has exhausted it, and will remember much of what she has been told. Why is the stoplight red? What would happen if it got stuck? Who turns it on and off? Why, why, why? A gifted child's questions will be specific, relevant and often proceed from previous answers.

• Can she concentrate for relatively long periods? Even as babies, gifted children can stay with an activity for quite a while, tuning out other distractions, and becoming upset over interruptions.

Becky cannot only follow a story written for an older child, but she can answer questions about it, thus demonstrating the depth of her absorption. As she grows, she will probably be a self-starter, able to develop her own projects and work for hours without constant encouragement from others.

• Does he show an early interest in reading, writing and time? (clocks and calendars, yesterday and tomorrow?)

The gifted child often notices the differences between letters, can figure out exactly where you're reading, wants to be shown how to write his name and will probably teach himself to read before entering kindergarten.

• Does he show unusual talent in a specific field?

A musical baby may turn toward the stereo whenever a familiar piece is played; a three-year-old may pick out tunes on the piano or quickly master sheet music.

A visually-gifted preschooler might produce a detailed drawing of a tree, branches and birds while his classmates struggle to put eyes and nose on a face. A child with extremely strong psychomotor ability can excel at a sport or physical activity, and will seem to thrive on long practice hours.



• Does he like being with older children and adults? Collect things and enjoy organizing them? Have a good sense of humor?

Although there are additional characteristics, these are typical of a gifted preschooler. Most children will have almost all of them, a few just one or two. In rarer cases, a youngster may not dis-

play any of these tendencies at an early age, and may instead be "turned on" later in life by a special teacher or exposure to an unusual interest. In general, giftedness can be identified sometime between the ages of three and seven, with the more gifted children surfacing at the earlier ages.

What should you do?

Giftedness means just that — your child's abilities have been given to him, and will mean little unless they are nurtured.

Most school districts now offer special services for gifted students and preschoolers, and professionals continue to develop additional resources. But recent research indicates that giftedness can actually be "lost" if it is not stimulated from the start, so the parents of a gifted child will probably play the most important and earliest role. If you believe your child is gifted, what should you be doing about it?

• First of all, relax. Most experts believe that if giftedness has surfaced, you must *already* be providing an appropriate level of stimulation for your child. The trick now is to stay ahead of (or at least keep up with) him so he will keep growing.

• For babies

Dr. Burton White believes that an infant born into a normal loving home needs no special treatment early in life, and will develop splendidly if parents simply follow their own instincts. From about eight months on, however, babies require a certain type of environment in order to reach their maximum potential.

There should be a primary caretaker available, one who is willing to explain, be a safe refuge, give affection and set limits.

The baby should be allowed to explore his environment, move around, climb, taste, touch and feel to his heart's content (while

kept reasonably safe).

He should be given material that will encourage "learning-to-learn" skills — lids and containers, hinges, books and other playthings. A baby between the ages of eight months and two years who is provided with these experiences will develop, according to Dr. White, in the very best ways.

• From two to five

An atmosphere that stimulates preschool learning requires some planning, but needn't be elaborate.

Familiarize your child with the library by the time he is three; let him choose some of his own books and read to him every day.

Talk to him often about what you are doing; let him take part in cooking, shopping, gardening, laundry-sorting and cleaning.

See that he has ample floor and desk/table space on which to play; primary colors, plenty of shelves and an "unfussy" atmosphere work best in his own room.

Carefully scrutinize the suggested age ranges on toys, and buy the items you suspect your tot will enjoy. Remember, in most cases, the less a toy does by itself, the better. Old standbys like blocks, clay, discarded clothes, small people figures and cars stimulate the best creativity.

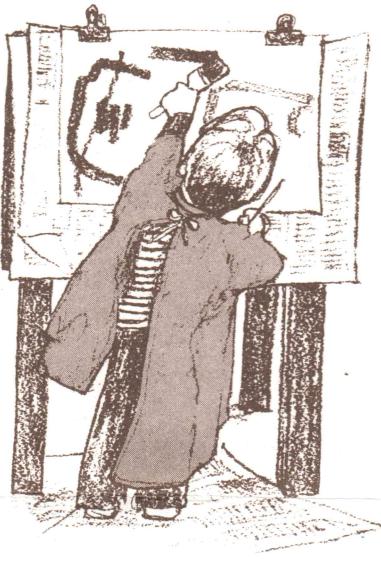
A good preschool may reinforce home-based learning, and provide social opportunities as well.

• For grade-schoolers

As your child's talents and needs become better defined, you can seek out other sources of enrichment — a dance instructor, French language class, athletic coach. Unless your child is locked into one intensive course of study or interest, keep aiming for a variety of experiences. Trips to museums or zoos, swimming or art or computer classes, collections, tools, magazine sub-

scriptions — they all play a part in developing your youngster's gifts.

And don't use giftedness as an excuse for poor behavior. Creative children often exhibit wild and silly ideas, extreme playfulness, nonconformity and emotional sensitivity; intellectuals may challenge the logic of certain rules — and all of this can make discipline harder for parents.



Giftedness means just that — your child's abilities have been given to him, and will mean little unless they are nurtured.

Although you may need to develop different approaches with gifted grade-schoolers, there's no need to feel intimidated just because Susan is more talented than you are. Gifted children, like any others, need firmness, consistency and stability; it's difficult for them to develop their talents in an atmosphere of chaos and shifting standards. Susan is bright, but Susan must earn her place in the "Real World" — through appropriate behavior — just like everyone else. And that depends on you.

• For children of every age

Emphasize a loving home at-

mosphere, where every member is accepted for who he is rather than what he can achieve.

Recent research has indicated that hard-driving, over-achieving "Type A" individuals are far more likely to come from homes where acceptance was conditional, based on accomplishments and awards. A team at the University of California, currently tracking gifted women, is finding that a strong, loving and accepting father seems to have been a significant factor in the positive development of these daughters.

While it is ego-building and tempting to emphasize your gifted child's accomplishments, and continue pressing him to achieve even more, it's better to concentrate on keeping things warm and casual, and letting each family member be who he is. Your gifted youngster will go through periods of non-achievement as well as times of great strides, and he'll need you to be a supportive and loving anchor rather than a scorekeeper.

Finally, realize that although raising a gifted child is exciting and challenging, it can sometimes be exhausting too. Don't hesitate to seek outside advice and help whenever you are running out of energy — and take recreation time for yourself and your spouse at regular intervals. What keeps you happy will have a positive effect on your gifted child too, and that's a good investment for everyone.

Joan Wester Anderson is a wife, mother of five and freelance author of books, articles and short stories, many of them dealing with family topics.

*For a sample packet of information, send a self-addressed envelope with 40¢ postage to The American Association for Gifted Children, 140 E. Monument Drive, Dayton, Ohio 45402.

Gift strategies for the child who has everything

By Diane Burton Robb

Are today's children turning into "superconsumers?"

- As television dangles the carrot, they insist on collecting all the new ponies or robots, then completely lose interest in them.
- Shrewd manufacturers create endless demand by producing dolls and toys that are all slightly different. Then real or rumored shortages put the squeeze of competition on children to "outconsume" their peers.

The result? Toys that could hold interest for years lose out to the newest craze.

It's not all television and peer pressure, either. Parents, grandparents, and well-meaning friends respond to the plea "I just have to have one."

Perhaps some adults remember their own childhoods when they yearned for certain toys but were told by parents they couldn't afford them. Yet it's ironic that the same old doll or worn-out baseball mitt they were stuck with eventually became their most prized possession.

What can today's parents do about "kiddie consumerism?"

First, parents can resolve to set firm gift-giving strategies and rules and then follow them. It may take some time to get used to the idea since many adults grew up with the idea that the more gifts received the better. Today's children can be taught to value the spirit behind giving and the importance of the individual gift vs. "the big haul."

The following strategies can help parents set sensible guidelines for gift-giving occasions:

Limit the number of gifts

Nothing is quite as exciting as waking up on Christmas morning to find the floor covered with gifts. Yet children simply don't have the capacity to open gifts for hours at a time and still appreciate and enjoy them all. Chances are they will be so intent on finding out how many gifts they've received that they couldn't care less what's inside.

Last Christmas morning, our five-year-old daughter bounded down the stairs to behold dozens of gifts from parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. In the midst of such extravagance, she began to cry because her cousin had received a pair of Cabbage Patch slippers and she had not. She was so agitated by the excitement and the urge to accumulate a pile of "goodies" that she scarcely noticed what she had already opened.

Buy one or two things your child really wants

Pick a few playthings your child has been pining for. He will get more out of them than a dozen toys you think he ought to have.

Help relatives get more mileage out of fewer gifts by providing them with very specific gift suggestions and ideas. If they want to buy more let them. Extras can be put away for another occasion.

Plan before you buy

Make a list of what you're looking for, and don't get carried away with impulse items. Every parent faces the trap of buying what he or she wanted as a child, or finds attractive now.

Remember, too, that youngsters' desires change quickly, as do toy trends. The ballet book you bought during the summer for a budding ballerina may be a *pas* for this fall's gymnast. Give children a chance to identify

what they really want fairly close to the holidays.

Don't forget to keep a list of what you've already bought and where you've stashed it.



It may take some time to get used to strategies and rules of gift giving since many adults grew up with the idea that the more gifts received the better

Don't make a gift yourself thinking it will be special to the child

This sounds harsh, but it probably won't be special. Children will naturally compare the item to "store-bought" and discount its sentimental value in favor of the more professional-looking, sought-after toy. Better to save homemade projects for rainy days when you can enlist the child's help and help him to understand the special nature of gifts lovingly made by hand.

Make sure your gifts are appropriate

A new bicycle or soccer ball may be the gift your daughter wants most, but to receive it in the middle of a dreary winter will just be frustrating. So is a complicated puzzle or toy bought with the thought that your two-year-

Play Things



2 years 1 month

Busy hands and bright minds

Challenges for your eager-to-learn Toddler

Does Toddler seem to be in a state of perpetual motion? He's apt to be extremely curious at this active age—and if he's not busy moving around, your little one will usually need something in his hands to keep himself occupied!

He still enjoys imitating people (especially you!), and is beginning to advance into actual make-believe play, where he creates wonderful fantasy situations as only a child can. And because your child is starting to use words to communicate, the two of you can enjoy conversing about all sorts of things.

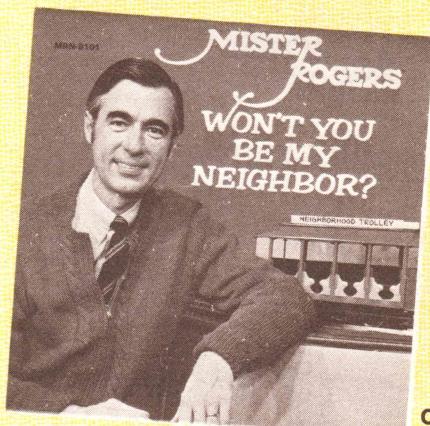
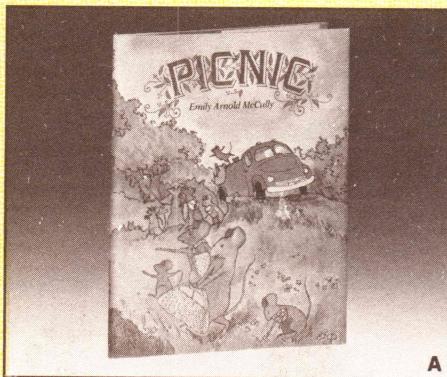
"Reading" books is becoming more entertaining, too. Toddler will have fun turning the pages for you, as he looks for details in a favorite picture book. He'll also delight in naming familiar objects he sees.

The special products in this Playthings issue offer plenty of variety and challenges to keep even the most active two-year-old content—while he's learning!



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Phone ordering by credit card only • For Customer Service, call (317) 423-2624
To pay by check or money order, please use the enclosed merchandise order form.



A **Picnic**, by Emily Arnold McCully.
The sky is bright and the grass is green. What a glorious day for a picnic! So a large, joyous mouse family heads for the lake. But wait, one little mouse is missing! And nobody will be happy until she's found.

A wordless book is good to introduce at this age to strengthen your child's observation skills.

The "summery" illustrations in this one fill the pages with action and spirit. No words are needed to understand this heart-warming, "pro-family" story.

Toddler is also developing his creative thinking and language skills as he tells the story in his own individual way.

Hardbound, 7 1/4" X 9 1/4", full color, 32 pp.

2-6 yrs.

TJF22

\$11.00

B **Toddler Tote**
This guaranteed-to-delight assortment of Lauri's most popular toddler toys offers a variety of challenges.

The easy-to-handle pieces focus your child's attention on basic shapes and primary colors, and invite your young learner to use his hands, language, and imagination.

The handy take-along tote (which Toddler will love to pack and unpack) is an added bonus. This carry-all feature provides portable fun in the car, at church, or in the doctor's office.

Four types of washable, unbreakable, quiet, and safe crepe foam rubber puzzles. The best in learning materials for your active, independent child. Lost pieces replaced.

Sturdy plastic tote. 35 pcs. 2-5 yrs.

TJK20

C **Won't You Be My Neighbor?**, by Mister Rogers. Children can't resist the charm of Mister Rogers. He helps youngsters feel good about themselves and gives them the confidence to succeed in their world.

This record sings to the needs of growing young children and to adults who find joy in growing with them. All the songs are written and performed by Mister Rogers in his warm, caring style.

Featured are friendly, helpful tunes such as "You're Growing," "Be Brave, Be Strong," and of course, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?"

Mister Rogers' widely acclaimed television show has brought him the respect of parents and educators, and the love of children everywhere.

12 songs. 2-6 yrs.

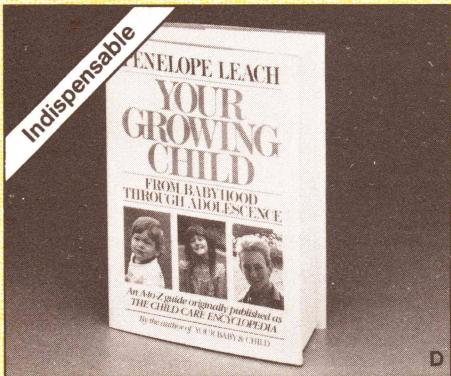
TJ791 LP

TJ796 Cassette

\$7.00

\$7.00

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D Your Growing Child
 by Penelope Leach, Ph.D.
 Aren't there times as a parent when you wish you had all the answers? This well-written, comprehensive encyclopedia covers a wide range of useful, timely topics, plus emergency advice for just about every possible crisis.

Alphabetical listings make it easy to find the answers in caring for your child's health and emotional well-being.

Penelope Leach is one of the foremost child care authorities. This book belongs in every home where there's a child.

Paperback, 6½" x 9½", 708 pp.

Originally published as **The Child Care Encyclopedia**.

TJZ29 \$15.00

E Big Pegboard and Pegs

A pegboard is something every child should have. It improves eye-hand coordination, refines finger dexterity, and encourages a sense of design unlike any other toy.

Youngster's first play will be to master the challenge of fitting the pegs into the holes. Next, he'll arrange the pegs by color. That will lead him to number and counting play.

Included are 25 hardwood pegs in five bright colors. Lost pieces replaced.

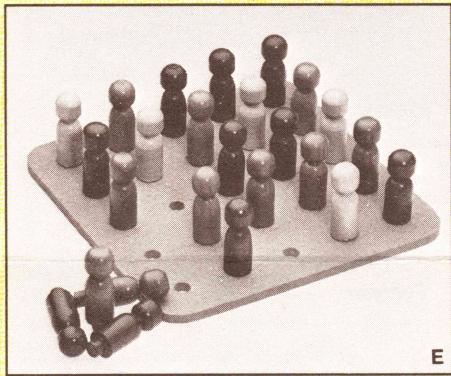
Lauri rubber pegboard, 8" square. Pegs, 2½" tall. 2-5 yrs.

TJL9 \$10.50

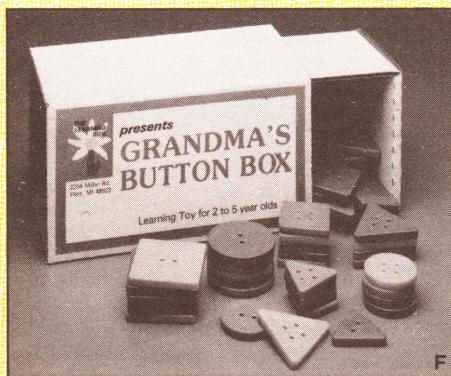
F Grandma's Button Box

Get out this unique developmental toy for learning and instruction and watch your child have lots of fun! Bunches of sturdy "buttons" in four bright colors, three basic shapes, and two sizes for each shape allow for all kinds of games for you and your child (instructions included).

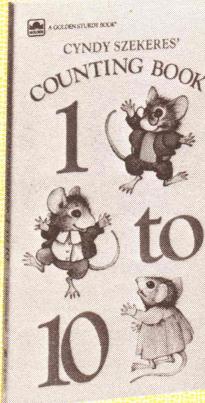
Toddler can differentiate, match, and classify



E



F



G

according to shape, color, size, or number of holes in the buttons. He can group them by multiple characteristics, number values, or make and match individual patterns.

48 buttons, all in a handy take-along box.
 2-5 yrs.

TJ983 \$11.00

G Counting Book 1 to 10
 by Cyndy Szekeres.

Active little field mice, alive with happiness and fun, teach your child all about counting in this cheery book.

The wide-eyed critters dance through the pages: one mouse walking, two mice running. Each number is written, shown numerically and used in a sentence.

The stiff, durable pages make this book last. Toddler will enjoy the pictures and look at the numbers. As a preschooler, she'll be able to read and count them.

Hardbound, 5¼" x 9¾", full color, 21 pp.
 1½-5 yrs.

TJ332 \$4.00

H Concept Train

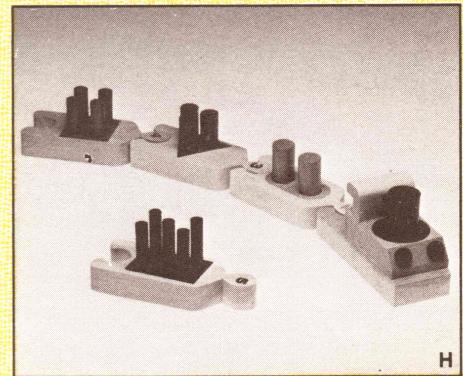
No wheels or tracks limit this train! Toddler can steer this toy in and out of the many make-believe lands in your home.

Concept Train offers two kinds of manipulative play: Your child's busy hands connect the cars together with the jigsaw interlock. Then, she inserts the colorful peg cargo into the corresponding holes.

Each car has an individual number, color, and shape. Every time your child takes this plaything for a ride, she reinforces her understanding of these vital concepts.

Hardwood, 5 cars, 15 pegs, 25" long.

TJH7 \$14.50
TJHP Replacement Pegs \$3.50



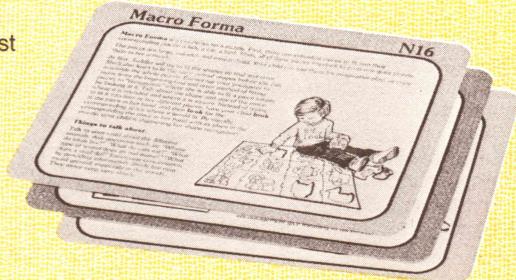
H

Our Guarantee

Our Guarantee is simple! We promise 100% satisfaction or your money back, anytime, for any reason. We want you to be completely satisfied with everything you get from Growing Child. **All Growing Child Playthings are sturdy, safe, and non-toxic.**

Toy Cards

A special bonus you'll receive with most Growing Child toys is our exclusive **Toy Card**. These cards help you get maximum play value from every purchase by suggesting games, new uses, and adaptations to hold a child's interest longer and stretch your toy dollar further.



old will "grow into it." Plan your gifts carefully for your child's developmental age and circumstances.

Spread gift purchases throughout the year

Some of the things your child will enjoy, like art supplies, grown-ups' castoffs, and educational toys, will elicit barely a crestfallen "thanks" if opened as Christmas presents, yet they'll evoke wide-eyed delight if "discovered" on an ordinary rainy day. It's all a matter of expectations and good timing. You might also try "forgetting" a Christmas gift, and "discovering" it about the time the holiday vacation starts to drag.

This doesn't mean you should set up the dangerous pattern of "bribing" with toys or allowing yourself to be badgered into buying something every time you set foot in the store. Save gifts for occasions, with a few little surprises in between.

Buy more expendable gifts

Most toys, like dolls, trucks, and stuffed animals, just seem to accumulate over the years. "Expendable" gifts such as bath cosmetics, stickers, markers and modeling clay will probably be enjoyed and used up in a year,

Children simply don't have the capacity to open gifts for hours at a time and still appreciate and enjoy them all.

and they're cheaper, too.

Don't forget the "un-toys"

Sometimes children's favorite playthings aren't toys at all, but the same simple household items you enjoyed when you were a child. Try a variety of cardboard boxes big enough to crawl into, hide under, paint, and finally demolish with pleasure. Old items of clothing for dress-up will provide endless entertainment. So will a box of art supplies, sewing materials like buttons, empty spools, string, and glue.

Get rid of toys that your child no longer uses.

Nothing bores or confuses a child more than an overwhelming collection of toys. With young children, it's a good idea to "rotate" toys, putting away a few that haven't been played with for a while, and bringing them back when you take a few of the current toys out of circulation. As a child outgrows toys, you can quietly put them away, and if the child never asks for them again, give them away, sell them, or

save them for another child.

Older children can become involved in the process, helping to sort out toys they no longer want to give to a charitable organization or sell in a garage sale. A used toy sale or kids' flea market can be fun and shows children the value of recycling their possessions.

The sooner you set sensible gift-giving limits for your children, the better. If you have older children, you'll have to "decelerate" your buying habits gradually, perhaps explaining your reasons for cutting back and helping shift the emphasis of holidays away from "getting" and more toward "giving."

Just stand firm, tune out TV advertising, and remember — you're not depriving your children, you're helping them learn the sensible habit of moderation, while gaining new appreciation for gifts given out of love and consideration.

Diane Burton Robb is a freelance writer, advertising copywriter, and the mother of a six-year-old daughter.

Watch for: "A Journey Through the First Year of Life"

A baby's life is one milestone after another: from the first smile to the first step, many dramatic changes and achievements will occur.

A new prime-time television special, "A Journey Through the First Year of Life," guides parents through these changes by highlighting the major steps in infant development, from the helpless newborn to the active one-year-old.

The program will air Sunday, December 7 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern time on CBN Cable Network and at 11:00 p.m. Eastern time on Tempo Television, formerly SPN, the Satellite Program Network.

The show is co-hosted by Judith Nolte, editor of *American Baby Magazine*, and Dr. Burton L. White, an educational psychologist and author of *The First Three Years of Life*. Dr. White is also Director of the Center for Parent Education in Newton, Massachusetts.

Using dramatic footage of babies in action, the two hosts interpret the meaning of each stage of development and explain how parents can enhance their infants' growth patterns.

Create your own holiday traditions with a "memory tree"

By Posy Baker Lough

I've always loved Christmas, especially the smell of the pine tree in the living room and the unpacking of beautiful ornaments.

But as I grew up and became a wife, the excitement of the holiday slowly died away. Store-bought ornaments held no magic. Although I tried hard to make our holiday special, something was missing.

Then one year, I discovered an old stuffed bear that my husband had given me, pining away in a corner of the attic. I brought it downstairs and put it on a branch of the tree.

Suddenly, that early spirit of Christmas wonder came back to me. The bear in the tree reminded me of the wonderful times my husband and I had shared. I realized that since our traditions are born out of our memories, memories were what would make our tree special.

Since then, I've made many ornaments for our memory tree out of family keepsakes. Each one tells a small story of our family life and love. They are priceless, but so simple to make. Here are a few of my favorites.

A circle of cones

Before our marriage, my husband served in Vietnam. Those days when he was gone were lonely and frightening. I would take long walks in the woods, thinking about him, gathering tiny hemlock cones for mementos.

Now, all these years later, I've made those cones into wreaths for our memory tree. Using brown window caulking for adhesive, I attached the cones to

a small wooden curtain ring. Shells make a pretty wreath, too, as well as pebbles, acorns, or any other small objects that evoke a special time for you.

Brocade memories

For our wedding, my mother made herself a beautiful dress of gold brocade. She also wore the dress to my sisters' weddings. After she died, I could not bear to give that dress away, so I made tiny wreaths of the material for our tree and for my sisters' trees. To others, these wreaths are just elegant ornaments, but to us they mean so much more! You could use the same idea with any special cloth — a favorite baby blanket, grandma's apron, an outgrown Scout uniform.

All my life I've loved flowers, so when my bridal bouquet threatened to disintegrate, I placed the petals in a clear glass ball, tied ribbons from the bouquet at the top of the ball, and hung it on our tree. You can get glass balls at hobby stores, and fill them with flowers from anniversaries, christenings, or special summer gardens.

Baby keepsakes

When our son Kyser was born, I hung onto every possible keepsake and found ways to add them to the memory tree. One day, they will become part of his own family's tree. I've kept a journal for him, describing each item and what significance it had in his early life.

Often, the ornaments are simple to make. For instance, the material in the curtains for his nursery contained Peter Rabbit characters. After he became a

"big boy," I cut the Peter Rabbit figure out of the curtain material and made it into a stuffed toy ornament. I've put his alphabet blocks and small wooden toys on a straw wreath, and two dozen very small keepsakes, from his hospital bracelet to a knitted bootie, make up his own very personal Advent calendar.

Our tree is filled with many memories already, but there is always room for more. I continue to make ornaments from items that are usually packed up or thrown away. Often, I save items from friends' special occasions and make "priceless" treasures to give back to them.

Look around your house. You will see many possibilities for your own memory tree. Try a few. Soon, your tree will reflect the richness of your family life.

Merry memories!

Posy Lough is a Growing Child subscriber who lives in Charlottesville, Virginia with her husband and three-year-old son. She is an educator and author of *Christmas Decorations: Turning Family Treasures Into Traditions*.



Posy Lough shares 16 of her favorite ideas for memory ornaments and decorations in her book, *Christmas Decorations: Turning Family Treasures Into Traditions*. The book includes clear instructions, patterns, photographs, and resource lists. It is available for \$5.00 (postpaid) from The Posy Collection, Attn: Christmas Book, P.O. Box 5341, Charlottesville, VA 22905. Virginia residents add 4% sales tax.

Research Briefs

Excerpts from child development research

Parents don't buy "neutral" clothing for their babies

New York — Parents tell researchers that they don't particularly care if strangers can tell at a glance whether their baby is a boy or a girl. But researchers observe that it is a rare infant whose clothes don't proclaim its sex.

A study of 24 infant girls and 24 infant boys and their caretakers revealed the disparity between parents' expressed opinions about sex-stereotyped clothing for babies — and their choices of outfits.

Almost no parent spontaneously admitted selecting baby clothes on the basis of masculinity or femininity. Virtually all insisted that durability was the chief criterion for purchase. Some commented on the unavailability of "neutral" baby clothes, although researchers found many either-sex garments on the market.

Seventy-five percent of the girls in the study wore pink; most of the others, yellow or white. Blue was seldom seen on girls; red even more rarely. Seventy-nine percent of the boys were dressed in blue; red was the runner-up color.

The color of carriage pillows, blankets, rattles and pacifiers also tipped-off passersby to the baby's sex in the few cases where clothing didn't reveal it.

Strangers correctly identified the babies' sex 87.5 percent of the time and most were obviously dependent on external cues. Since the infants ranged from one month to 13 months old, passersby needed all the help they could get. The study was carried out in a shopping mall.

The investigators wondered why parents were so reluctant to admit that they picked baby clothes and accessories according to their child's sex.

"Whether the parents in the study were unconscious of their strong labeling of their infants or felt some pressure to respond in a manner that would seem socially acceptable in these liberal days is not very clear," psycholo-

gists Madeline Shakin and Sarah Hall Stern-glanz of State University of New York at Stony Brook and Debra Shaken of Albany Law School observe in *Sex Roles*

Research Review
Volume 4 Number 1
January, 1986

Crowded waiting room no real danger to "well-child" patient

New York — Sometimes it seems almost foolish to bring a youngster to the doctor for a well-child checkup only to sit in a waiting room crowded with wheezing, snuffling, sick kids. However, a group of Massachusetts pediatricians reports that the risk of the youngster picking up an infection there is really quite low.

Comparison of 127 youngsters who had undergone routine checkups a week earlier with 127 children who hadn't been to the doctor at all showed no difference in the number of viral symptoms in each group. The children who had picked up viruses came from households where a family member had been sick.

Research Review
Volume 4 Number 6
June, 1986

The American Baby TV Show

| | On CBN Cable Network | |
|------------|----------------------|------------|
| Mondays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Tuesdays | 11:30 AM ET | 8:30 AM PT |
| Wednesdays | 8 PM ET | 5 PM PT |
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| Fridays | 4:30 PM ET | 1:30 PM PT |

A Journey Through the First Year of Life

| | On CBN Cable Network | |
|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| December 7 | | 8PM Eastern Time |
| December 7 | On TEMPO Television (formerly SPN Cable Network) | 11PM Eastern Time |
| Check local listings for channel. | | |

Fun things to do in December

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| | | | | | | |
| 1 Wait for a sunny day this month, and then sit in a rocking chair in front of a window. | 2 Look at food stored in the kitchen and say if it is served "hot" or "cold." | 3 Lie on your back on the floor and kick your legs up in the air. | 4 Spread cream cheese on toast and make a face with raisins. | 5 Walt Disney's Birthday. What "mouse" did he invent? Sing his song. <i>J bear J blocks J puzzle</i> | 6 Look through various Christmas catalogs and make wishes. | |
| 7 Take a drive and look for: a snowman, nativity scene, ice skaters, and winter birds. | 8 A leftover egg carton can be a boat in the bathtub. | 9 Give Youngster two safe aluminum pie tins to bang together. | 10 Put pudding or whipped cream on Baby's high chair tray and let him/her "go at it!" | 11 Kiss Mommy and Daddy under the mistletoe! | 12 Read THE POLAR EXPRESS , by Chris Van Allsburg. | 13 Summer Fun! Lay a colorful blanket on the floor, put on some funky clothes, and play with a beach ball. |
| 14 Go for a nighttime drive and look at the Christmas lights. Name the colors. | 15 Donate canned goods to a Christmas charity. Explain to Youngster why you give things. | 16 Look at a pine cone—what color is it? How does it feel to touch it? | 17 Lift Baby up and down and say the words "up" and "down" as you do this. | 18 Sing "If You're Happy and You Know It." | 19 What color is a polar bear? Why? | 20 Go to the library and look for a Hanukkah book. |
| 21 Sing Christmas carols. What is your favorite song? | 22 Name the colors on the wrapping paper on packages under the tree. | 23 Wear red and green and a smile today. | 24 Read 'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS . | 25 Merry Christmas! | 26 Sleep late, eat leftovers, and thank everyone for the gifts you received. | 27 Happy Hanukkah! |
| 28 Potato pancakes for supper. Name the ingredients. | 29 Make snowflakes—fold paper and cut out triangles and circles. | 30 Invite friends over for soup and games. | 31 Buy Youngster an inexpensive noise-maker to ring in the new year. (Or make one.) | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Growing Child <small>A Division of Dunn & Hight, Inc.</small> | | | | | | |
| For children 6 months to 6 years | | | | | | |

Growing Parent®

December 1986
Vol. 14 No. 12

Creating holiday adventures

Tailor your own fun and entertainment this year — just to fit your family's size and talents!

By Linda Essig

Commercialism at the holiday season seems to shout at us from every newspaper, television, and store. The message is: "Buy, buy, buy!"

Families can avoid being caught up in this cycle by choosing creative family activities with togetherness and tradition as the only qualifications. Here are some ideas to get you started.

Gingerbread house

One family sets aside an evening in early December to build a gingerbread house. When the children were small, the house was a square bungalow. Now it's a tall balconied showplace. Construction rates about an eight — eating "mistakes" rates a ten.

Amateur plays

For a family of amateur thespians, acting together is the ticket. "Our motto is: the family that 'plays' together, stays together," one father says.

Simplicity is the key factor in choosing plays, so that learning the lines is not overwhelming. Dramatic ventures can include classics like *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* and *The Shoemaker and His Elves*. Costumes can be borrowed or "makeshift." According to one family, "The best part about plays is not put-

ting them on for our extended family, but laughing our way through rehearsals."



Positive thoughts

Another couple prepares for the holiday by thinking of positive things. Each day for two weeks before Christmas, the parents write in a notebook two positive things they saw their children do that day. The positives must be specific and different from any listed before. The notebooks are wrapped, and each child gets a "gift" of 28 positive statements about themselves. "We feel — and our kids echo the feeling — that too much time is spent telling them what they do wrong," the parents explain. "The notebook is concrete evidence we also notice good things."

Personal albums

There are other concrete ways to show children we think about them. Starting when their children were infants, one young couple took pictures of each child alone and with the family and made a personal album-scrapbook. Other "treasures" like the first tooth that fell out or kindergarten report cards were also included. The father says, "The kids love to see how they have changed, and especially love to laugh at how funny their parents used to look."

Decorating the house

Many families are so rushed that even decorating the house becomes another chore. Instead of one person being "stuck" with this responsibility, one couple with pre-teen sons turns it into an annual family night.

In this issue

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| Creating holiday adventures | Page 1 |
| Some ideas to help make the holidays joyous and memorable. | |
| Hanukkah crafts to make | Page 3 |
| Simple and easy crafts for the whole family. | |
| The dangers of holiday plants | Page 4 |
| Make sure your home is safe for children and pets this holiday season. | |
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| Activity calendar | Page 8 |

Just before decorating time, candies, cookies, and beverages are set out. "The house is transformed into a festival of colors while we munch, talk, and listen to carols," the mother says.

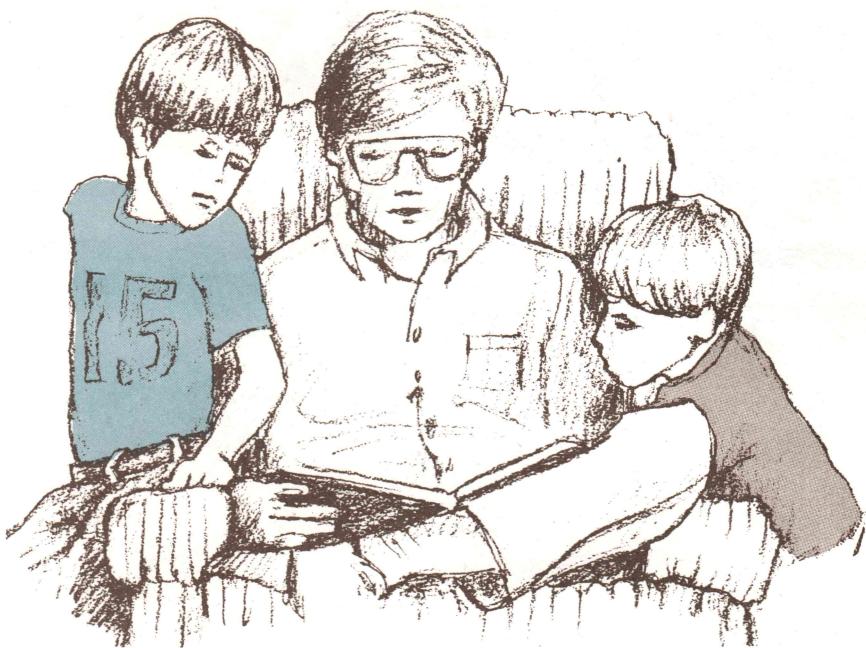
Small favors

Besides promoting shared activities, one couple who was bothered by a decline of religious emphasis concentrates on getting across the "true meaning of Christmas." In early December the empty manger is positioned near the tree. No baby Jesus. No straw. Each time one of the family members does a good deed for someone else, that person gets to place one piece of straw in the manger. The deeds are small: making someone else's bed, leaving a love note, extra hugs. The mother says, "Everyone is anxious for 'Baby' to have a large pile of straw to rest on when he is placed in the manger on Christmas Eve."

Family night

Time is a precious commodity in December. Early in the month one family posts a date during the week before Christmas — a night that everyone must keep open. The evening is regarded as the family's "gift of time" to each other. Before settling in for the evening, large bowls of popcorn and cider are made. Then everyone gathers around candles in the family room.

After talking about plans for the holiday, each member of the family tells one thing they like and one thing they dislike about each person in their family. "Children need to learn that they can express dislikes in a positive, safe atmosphere, and sometimes the dislikes serve as valuable tools for change," the father says. "Both of the kids said they hated it when I continued to read the paper while they talked to me, for instance."



Reaching out to others

The gift of time idea is also promoted by a single mother of two. She calls a local nursing home for the name of someone who has no family. Together, her family decides on a time to visit, taking simple things along like a homemade card or cookies. An adopted grandparent can be very important in teaching children about extended families.

Treasure hunt

The annual compiling of clues for a treasure hunt means silly time for another family. Each year a different person gets a clue instead of a gift in one of the presents under the tree. This clue leads to another, and another, and — after six or eight are correctly decoded — to a present. Clues can be hidden in closets, on computers, or anywhere your imagination leads you.

Meal planning

Although tradition calls for Christmas Eve meals such as turkey or oyster stew, one couple decided to let their children plan the menu. This meal is just for the five of them, and everyone cooperates in preparing it.

"When the kids were young, we had pizza or hot dogs," the head chef says. "Now we have 'graduated' to fondue meals."

Record the activities

Not everyone is fortunate to have their family living close enough for a holiday gathering. A tape recorder bridges the miles for one family. Everyone speaks individually and en masse, with plenty of laughing and confusion. After the gifts are opened and exclaimed over, (because the tape is still running) the family sings carols and sends warm wishes to the recipients. "Our children love to add 'special effects' during the singing like bells, hand clapping, or tapping sticks together," the mother says.

So this Christmas, plan ahead. Replace the "superficial glitter" of commercialism with your own family adventures.

Family traditions need not be complicated. One family lights the Christmas Eve fire with a piece of wood saved from last year's fire.

Linda Essig writes articles and short stories, many of them dealing with the family. She is the mother of two sons.

Hanukkah crafts to make

By Lynn Holland

Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of the Lights and the Feast of the Dedication, is a mid-winter Jewish holiday.

It's a happy time, commemorating the victory of the ancient Jews over their enemies. Today, Hanukkah is celebrated with candles, games, stories, songs, food, gifts, laughter, and prayers of praise.

Two thousand years ago, Hanukkah legend says, the Syrian-Greeks captured and desecrated the sacred Jewish temple in Jerusalem. With great faith and bravery, the Jews succeeded in taking it back. They cleansed and rededicated it, but when it was time to light the lamp, there was only enough oil for one day. By a miracle, the oil burned for eight days, and that's why Hanukkah is kept for eight days. Each night a candle is lit to remind Jews of the oil that kept the lamp burning in the temple so long ago.

Hanukkah is a holiday that is fun for everyone. Young children especially respond to its festiveness and warmth — even if they don't understand the meaning, they are fascinated by the lights.

Children also love to help make the special symbols of Hanukkah: the candle holders, the dreidels, the potato latkes, the decorations and gifts. Let each child help according to his or her own age and skills, and remember that it doesn't really matter what the final product looks like. It's the participation and the fun that makes the tradition.

Lighting the lamps

The main feature of the celebration of Hanukkah is the kindling of the lights, one for each of the eight nights and one called

the shamash which is used to light the others. One candle is lit on the first evening, two on the second, three on the third, and so on from right to left.

Today most lamps are made either in a flat bench style or a menorah style with nine branches. You can use any materials at hand: clay, wood, metal — even paper.



Clay menorah

Clay is the perfect medium for menorah candle holders because once fired it is durable and non-flammable. Almost every community has facilities for firing and glazing ceramics (try the local school, art center, YM or YWCA). You can also buy clay products that can be dried in a home oven.

The simple, direct hands-on methods of cutting, rolling, pinching, and squeezing are just right for clay menorahs. Just be sure to keep work in progress damp under plastic bags, and let everything dry slowly so it won't explode or crack in the kiln or oven.

Acorn lamp

The materials for an acorn menorah can be found on a walk through the woods. Pick up a flat piece of wood or bark about a foot long, and nine fat acorn or nut hulls. Soak the hulls for about two hours in a solution of alum

(available in a hardware or drug-store) and water to flameproof them. When they are dry, glue them onto the base with white glue. Bits of moss and lichen make nice decorations. Stick the candles upright in the shells with bits of wax.

Paper menorah

A paper menorah can be cut of sturdy construction paper and taped to the refrigerator door. Paper flames mean even very young children can "light" their own candles safely.

Candle boxes

No matter what kind of menorah or lamp you make, you will need 44 Hanukkah candles to light, and you will need a place to keep them. A candle box made from a cigar box painted and decorated with Hanukkah symbols is a wonderful project for children.

Dreidels

The most popular Hanukkah game is a put-and-take game played with a spinning top called a dreidel.

Dreidels have a Hebrew letter on each of four sides standing for "Nes Gadol Hayah Sham," or "A great miracle happened here." Roughly translated, the letters mean "nothing," "take," "half," and "put."

The game starts with each player adding an agreed-on amount of nuts, candy, raisins, or coins to the kitty, and then spinning the dreidel in turn, paying the penalty indicated by the letter that is on top when the dreidel falls.

If a player spins "nothing," then nothing happens and the next player spins. If "take" comes up, the player gets all that is in the kitty and everyone contributes to a new one. "Half" means the player gets half of the kitty, and "put" means the player must put into the kitty whatever

forfeit has been agreed on. The game ends when one player has won everything.

Simple dreidels can be made from egg cartons, wooden spools, or even paper, using pencils or dowels for the handle.

When impregnated with white glue or wallpaper paste, egg cartons become very strong and durable. They can then be painted and decorated. Use white glue to hold the pencil or dowel in the center.



A very simple dreidel can be made of a piece of sturdy cardboard about three inches square with a pencil pushed through the middle.

Latkes

It is said that fried food for Hanukkah is popular because it reminds us of the Hanukkah miracle. The potato latke is a traditional favorite.

Potato Latkes

9 medium potatoes, grated
3 small onions, grated
Salad oil
3 eggs, slightly beaten
3 tablespoons flour
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon baking powder

Wash the potatoes (don't peel) and grate coarsely. Grate in the onions. Stir in the eggs, flour, pepper, salt, and baking powder. Let stand 10 minutes, then drain. Drop by spoonfuls into a large skillet containing about 1/4" salad oil. When the edges turn brown, turn and brown the other side. Drain on

paper towels and keep warm in a low (185°) oven.

Latkes are traditionally served warm with sour cream, home-made applesauce and jelly doughnuts.

So there you have it — traditions that are yours for the making.

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Lynn Holland is a staff writer for *Growing Parent*.

The dangers of holiday plants

By Evelyn Witter

A number of common plants which have become traditional for home decoration at the holiday season have poisoning potential. Enjoy — but be careful with . . . the Jerusalem cherry, mistletoe, Christmas rose, poinsettia, and holly.

Jerusalem cherry

The Jerusalem cherry is a popular holiday house plant because the cherry-like fruit ripens and turns a bright shade of red in December.

All parts of this plant, however, contain poisons which may cause vomiting and diarrhea, or may attack the nervous system, paralyzing the muscles and causing unconsciousness and sometimes death.

Mistletoe

Another common decorative holiday plant is the mistletoe. The poisonous part of mistletoe is the sticky, whitish berries. If swallowed, these berries can cause intestinal upsets and in large enough doses, they can be fatal as well.

Christmas rose

The Christmas rose, so pretty in bloom, is not really a rose at all. It is a close relative of the buttercup.

The thick, fleshy roots are the most dangerous part of this plant. Children or pets digging in the potting soil of the Christmas rose are in danger of getting some of the root bits into their mouths. It is best to keep the pot out of reach.

Poinsettia

It would be hard to imagine Christmas without the poinsettias. The poinsettia is raised for its white, pink, or red "flowers" which are not flowers at all, but bracts (a special kind of leaf). Unfortunately, the milky juice from the leaves has irritating substances that can cause digestive upsets or blistering of the mouth. The juice may also irritate the skin.

Holly

The holly, with its green, shiny leaves and red berries, has been a holiday tradition for years. However, the berries contain a bitter poison that can cause violent vomiting and diarrhea. Small children and cats are attracted to the pretty berries but will suffer from eating them.

Evelyn Witter is a writer, part-time teacher and workshop leader. Her work includes fiction and non-fiction for children and adults.

From the Editor



Nancy
Kleckner

Making the holidays a positive experience

Yes, you can!

You can be the person to make it happen at your house this year. You and your family can leave behind guilt, frustration, anxiety and depression and instead have the kind of holidays you've always wanted but never seem to have.

Does this sound like some kind of pie-in-the-sky advertisement that would be nice, but probably isn't practical? Why not give it a try anyway. Here are a few practical tips that might make for a better holiday experience at your house:

- **Make a list.** Think long and hard about the most important things you want to happen during the holiday period. Then sit down and make a list. Don't forget to include time for the mundane but necessary chores: laundry, shopping, dishes, etc. If you plan for them, they won't be the surprise that completely throws off your plans.

- **Don't overplan.** Be realistic. Many times we're disappointed because we plan to do more than is humanly possible. Keep your list simple and stick to it. Don't keep adding items.

- **Allow more time than is necessary** for chores, shopping, food preparation, etc. That way you won't come up short because of changed plans, unexpected event or extra guests.

- **Ask for help and allow others to help.** If you and Cousin Bill want to have a long talk, why not keep your hands busy at the same time? Visitors almost always want to help do something — remember how you feel when you're visiting in someone's home? — so enlist their help in things that *really do* need to be done.

- **Watch your health.** Times are busy and sometimes there just doesn't seem to be enough time to eat and sleep as much or as well as we'd like. Realize this is just a temporary time period during which you'll need to make a special effort to see that everyone in the family sleeps and eats well.

I was going to list some nifty, different things to do this year for the holidays when along came the article from Linda Essig (See "Creating holiday adventures," this issue). Some of our ideas were similar, but there are still a few left over. I hope at least one of them works out well for your family.

Nancy Kleckner

Something different to do for the holidays

1. Give a totally unexpected gift to someone you love, or just want to surprise.

2. Don't forget special friends during this busy time. Have a "special friends" lunch.

3. Schedule a cookie/candy/treat-making night and do it — no matter what. Homemade goodies make the best kind of gifts.

4. Attend a religious service with someone, at a different place of worship. The familiar is always comforting and important, but a new experience can be wonderfully inspiring and special, too.

5. Gather up some children and help them make a gift for their parents. Children love to do this and even the littlest ones can make *something* (with a little help) with glue and pine cones.

6. Make a donation, however small, to a local charity of your choice. Many organizations depend heavily on seasonal giving. Those small gifts add up.

7. Bring someone into your home for the holidays — for an afternoon, an evening, a meal. You have something many folks don't have — a child. And children somehow light up so many quiet lives with their noise, laughter and happiness.

Research Briefs

Excerpts from child development research

Misbehaving child may need help reducing stress, not punishment

Ames, Iowa — Children under stress tend not to turn their faces to the wall in a genteel display of unhappiness. What they usually do is misbehave, so they are more likely to be punished than helped, points out Sam Clark, a child development specialist at Iowa State University.

Bearing in mind that inexplicable misbehavior might be a symptom of stress, parents can do some delicate probing before they spring into action. If there are indications that the youngster is under pressure:

- Try getting the child to talk about the way things are going for him; encourage him to express his feelings about people, incidents or situations that bother him.
- Listen patiently without pooh-poohing problems, criticizing attitudes or lecturing her for overreacting.
- Give immediate comfort, letting the youngster know, with words and a hug, that he doesn't have to bear bad times alone.
- Read or make up stories about a child with similar difficulties.

If the situation or problem is going to be around for a while, parents can take long-term precautions to minimize stress, says Clark. Some suggestions:

- Provide enough family structure and routine to increase the child's sense of security. Don't overdo, though, or he or she may end up feeling more stressed than ever.
- Maintain basic limits on the child's behavior, even though it's tempting to relax discipline. He needs to get the crucial message that parents care about what he does.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for vigorous exercise, creative play, constructive work — and rest.

These things may sound mundane, but many children do not have such opportunities and the adults around them may not remember how important they are to a child, Clark reminds.

When children hurt others as an outlet for their tensions, obviously the behavior must be stopped. Children should feel they can confide mean or negative feelings to the listening parent, but never get the idea that they are justified in being cruel. Clark suggests redirecting the child who is behaving hurtfully, asking him to perform a task that is needed and important, such as feeding the pets or helping far-sighted Grandma thread her needle.

*Research Review
Volume 4 Number 7
July, 1986*

Sponging may not be the answer to reducing fevers

Toronto — Forget the sponge as a fever-fighting tool, says Dr. Jack Newman of Toronto's hospital for Sick Children.

When 73 youngsters who were dosed with aspirin or acetaminophen and then sponged were compared with 57 children who received the medication only, no difference in temperature reduction was shown.

*Research Review
Volume 4, Number 6
June, 1986*

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| December 7 | | 11PM Eastern Time |
| | Check local listings for channel. | |

From all of us to all of you: Happy holidays and best wishes for a most happy and prosperous New Year!



Front row: Carol Robinson, Beth Sebrey, Jesty Salvo, Kim Whiteaker, Dorothy Fuller
2nd row: Pam Linn, Judy Hart, Lisa Walton, Sue McGee, Rosemary Allen, Nancy Studer, Barb Howell, Cheryl Bible
3rd row: Calla Wooldridge, Shirley Wagner, Dennis Dunn, Karen Lowry, Linda Dillman, Elly Vauters, Jackie Tweddell, Iris Dean, Linda Stonebraker, Evelyn Barrett, Dot Bannon
4th row: Joanie Taronis, Yvonne Terry, Donna Worthington, Allen Mennear, Candy Graves, Pat Payne, Jane Meadows, Ed Nelson, Linda Chadwell, Al Harnish
Back row: Jim McGee, Rob Payne, Eric Deck, Gary Shoaf, Jill Wilson, Russ Flynn, Nancy Kleckner, Bruce Graves, Louis Lukac, Ryan Deweese, Bruce Dingle

Fun things to do in January